



The SCOURGE

#0

COVER A





#0

COVER B

The SCOURGE



THE SCOURGE™

Issue 0

"ZERO TO SIXTY"

STORY
SCOTT LOBDELL

ILLUSTRATIONS
ERIC BATTLE

COLORS
JORGE FARES

LETTERS
JOSH REED

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www.AspenStore.com: CHRIS RUPP

The Scourge lettering font designed by: DREAMER DESIGN

THE SCOURGE CREATED BY
GALE ANNE HURD

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RO TO SIXTY!

I'VE HAD BETTER DAYS THAN THIS.

AS AN NYPD SWAT, I HAD TO SHOOT A ZEALOT IN THE HEAD FROM HALF A BLOCK AWAY TO KEEP HIM FROM DETONATING A BOMB AT THE SOUTH STREET SEAPORT.

THERE WAS A TIME I HAD TO STORM THROUGH A CLOUD OF TEAR GAS IN ORDER TO TERMINATE A CRAZED NYU STUDENT BEFORE HE COULD FINISH TERMINATING THE FACULTY LOUNGE.

HELLO?

CLAIRE, IT'S ME.

WHA--?! GRIFFIN, WHY ARE YOU CALLING ME NOW?

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE MEETING JONATHAN OUTSIDE OF THE THEATER IN... EIGHT MINUTES!

THAT'S WHY I CALLED-- FOR THE EXACT TIME. EIGHT MINUTES, HUNH? I'LL BE THERE.

YOU BETTER BE! SO HELP ME, GRIFFIN. IF YOU DISAPPOINT HIM AGAIN--

AND FIVE YEARS IN THE MARINES BEFORE THIS?

NONE OF IT COULD HAVE PREPARED ME FOR WHAT HAPPENED IN THE LAST HOUR.

WHAT I'VE DONE.

WHAT I'M ABOUT TO DO.



GRA
HGA

KRUMP

--I'M GOING
TO TEAR YOU
A NEW ONE!

YOU MIGHT
BE TOO
LATE.

TEN MINUTES AGO?
MAYBE FIVE?

THIS-- THING-- WAS A
MOTORCYCLE COP.

PROBABLY
NEAR THE END
OF HIS SHIFT.

THINKING ABOUT
GETTING HOME TO
HIS WIFE AND KIDS.

NOW ALL HE WANTS
TO DO IS KILL ME.

NO. WORSE
THAN THAT.

HE WANTS TO MAKE
ME JUST LIKE HIM.

RHEEKKK

TH-BOOM

BLAM
BLAM
BLAM

AIN'T GONNA'
HAPPEN!

THAT'S THE
END OF--

HOW THE
HELL--?!

GUNSHOTS?!

ARE YOU KIDDING
ME, GRIFF?! ARE
YOU STILL AT
WORK?!

OF COURSE.
STANDARD
ISSUE...

...BULLET FREAKIN'
PROOF FREAKIN'
VEST.

JON WAS
COUNTING ON
SEEING HIS FATHER
TODAY!

DON'T ASK
ME WHY, BUT FOR
SOME REASON HE STILL
BELIEVES YOU WHEN YOU
SAY YOU'RE GOING TO
BE SOMEWHERE!

PLUCK

CAN'T LET IT
TOUCH ME--
PIERCE THE
SKIN!

I'VE SEEN WHAT
HAPPENS!

YANK

ARE
YOU STILL
THERE?

ARE YOU
LISTENING
TO ME?!



DAMMIT!
GUN HAND...
IS PINNED
BETWEEN US!

I HAVE NO IDEA IF
A BITE WOULD DO
THE SAME THING
AS A SWIPE OF
ITS CLAWS.

BUT I DON'T
INTEND TO
FIND OUT!

RAARGH

"RAARGH?"

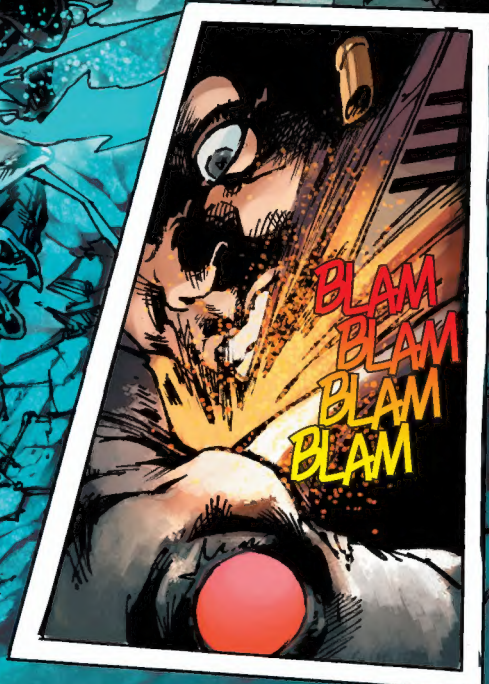
REALLY, GRIFF?

THAT IS SO
IMMATURE.

MY ONLY
CHANCE...

...IS TO
DROP THE
PHONE...

...AND
REACH...
HIS...





...IT'S NOT GOING TO BE ME.

THAT WOULD SOUND GREAT IF I WAS AN ACTION STAR IN SOME 100 MILLION DOLLAR SUMMER BLOCKBUSTER...



...BUT I'M NOT.

I'M JUST A COP TRYING TO FIND HIS SON AND GET THE HELL OUT OF DODGE BEFORE THE WHOLE CITY IS CORDONED OFF OR...

...I CAN'T THINK ABOUT THAT RIGHT NOW.

I NEED TO FIGURE OUT HOW I'M GOING TO GET ACROSS TOWN IN THE SEVEN MINUTES I HAVE BEFORE JONATHON'S PLAY LETS OUT.



IF I CAN FIND THAT OFFICER'S WHEELS...

...OR...

...THAT VINTAGE DUCATI OUGHT TO DO THE TRICK!

BINGO!



SORRY, OFFICER-- I NEED YOUR GEAR.

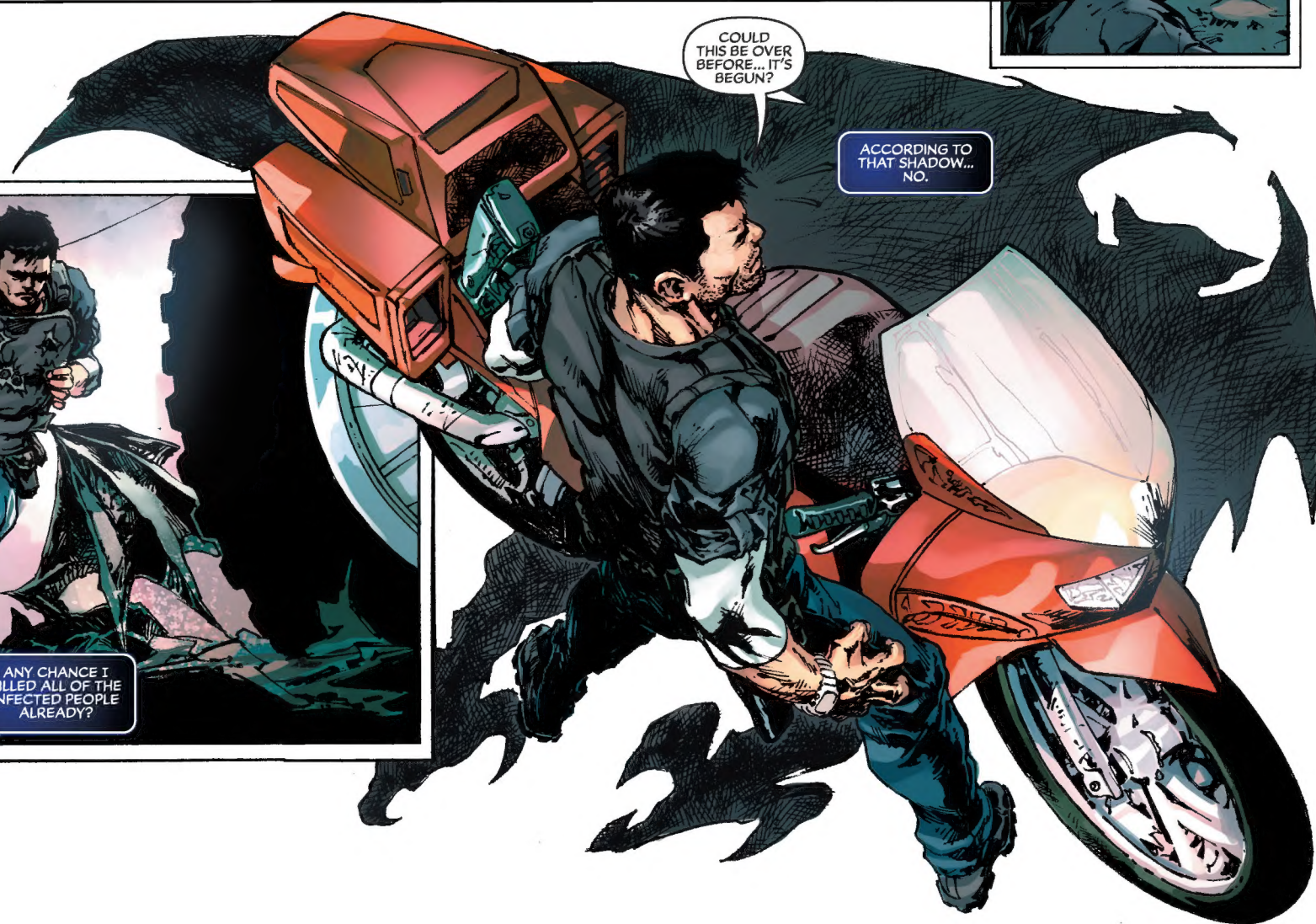


AND THE VEST.

IT'S SUDDENLY GOTTEN VERY QUIET. IS IT POSSIBLE?



ANY CHANCE I KILLED ALL OF THE INFECTED PEOPLE ALREADY?



COULD THIS BE OVER BEFORE... IT'S BEGUN?

ACCORDING TO THAT SHADOW... NO.



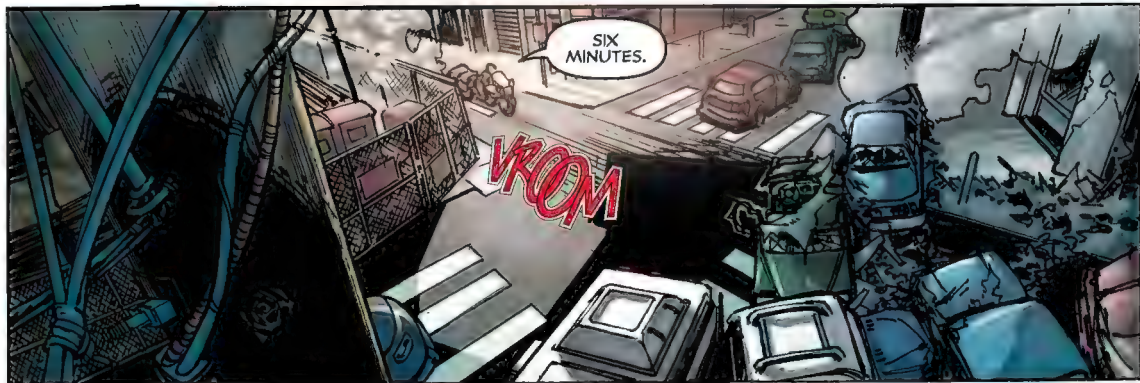
BAROOM

A WINDOW
WASHER.

THAT MEANS
THEY'VE TAKEN
TO THE AIR.

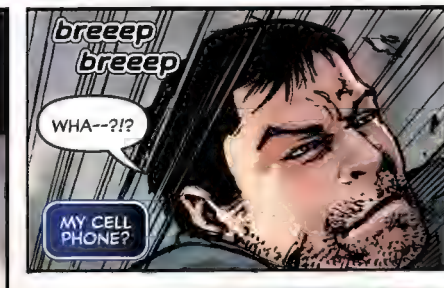


NOBODY'S
SAFE.



SIX MINUTES.

VROM



breep
breep

WHA--?!?

MY CELL
PHONE?



breep
breep

MUST HAVE
LANDED IN MY
POCKET WHEN
I DROPPED IT.



LUCKY
ME.

breep
breep

HELLO?



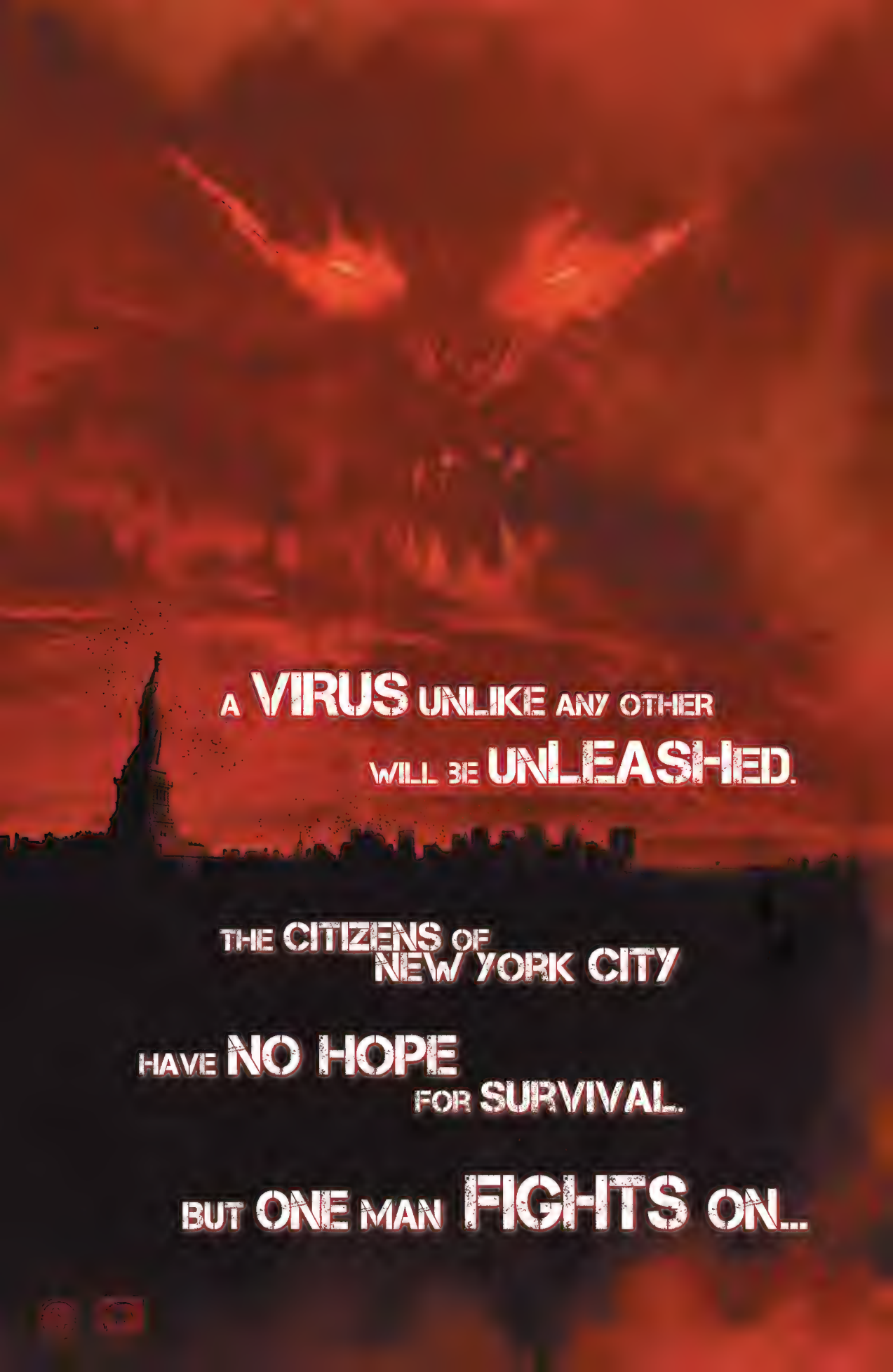
GRIFFIN-- DID YOU HANG UP ON ME?!

TELL ME YOU DID NOT HANG UP ON ME!

HONESTLY, CLAIRE?

NOT A GOOD TIME TO TALK.

**TO BE CONTINUED IN...
THE SCOURGE #1**



A **VIRUS** UNLIKE ANY OTHER
WILL BE **UNLEASHED.**

THE **CITIZENS** OF
NEW YORK CITY

HAVE **NO HOPE**
FOR SURVIVAL.

BUT **ONE MAN** **FIGHTS** ON...

The SCOURGE

#1



GET INFECTED.

THE COMIC BOOK EVENT OF THE SUMMER
FROM THE INNOVATIVE MIND OF

GALE ANNE HURD

ACCLAIMED MOVIE PRODUCER OF:

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ARMAGEDDON
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THE INFECTION BEGINS

BY SCOTT LOBDELL & ERIC BATTLE

WHEN I WAS A YOUNG

comics fan (once upon a time, when they used to carve comic books out of stone tablets)... it used to be you would hop on a dinosaur and head to the local comic cave or dried root store and pick up a comic. This was before solicits and house ads and the internet -- so sometimes you'd get to the comics rack and there would be a book you never even heard of! In fact, sometimes there would be books you never even imagined!

I remember the first time I saw THE CHAMPIONS, with no warning whatsoever! And FIRESTORM! How cool was that?!

One day, nothing... then suddenly, a whole new world!

It was fun, but I have to say, the whole idea of a "O" issue is its own kind of fun! Sort of like the 2010 version of diving into the pool without getting your feet wet first. You see the "O" on the cover, especially of an Aspen book, and you right away know you're about to be tossed somewhere in the middle of a whole world you'll get to know intimately over the next few months.

You know they're going to give you an inside look into the creation of these characters and the crisis they are facing. (Trust me, in THE SCOURGE the crisis lasts six straight issues of "Holy -- ?!"). You get to read the notes by the writer (Humble ole' me) and get to ogle the earliest sketches by the artist (Electric Eric Battle!). You also get to see what it is that NYPD SWAT officer Griffin is going to be getting himself into just because he wanted to get some vacation time in the mountains of Europe and the problem that got brought back with him to New York City.

Sadly, you'll never know the joy of riding home on the back of your T-Rex with a whole handful of new comics... but you do get to buy the "O" issue, so it all works out in the end!

SCOTT LOBDELL
Los Angeles, CA



GRIFFIN

JOHN GRIFFIN is an NYPD SWAT officer who has not had his head in the game lately. His wife leaving him was bad enough, but the pending custody trial for his eight year old son is working John's last nerve.

This is why his best friend and dentist DR. PETER NEWBURGH insisted GRIFFIN join him on the rock climbing vacation in Europe. When things go crazy after an ancient pandemic hits Manhattan, GRIFFIN's training leaves him suited to help stop the pending world wide cataclysm...

...But can he save his son and stop this plague, or does he have to choose one over the other?

NEWBURGH

DR. PETER NEWBURGH is loyal, generous, funny and good-hearted person. Maybe the last guy you would suspect would be responsible for... well, you'll see.

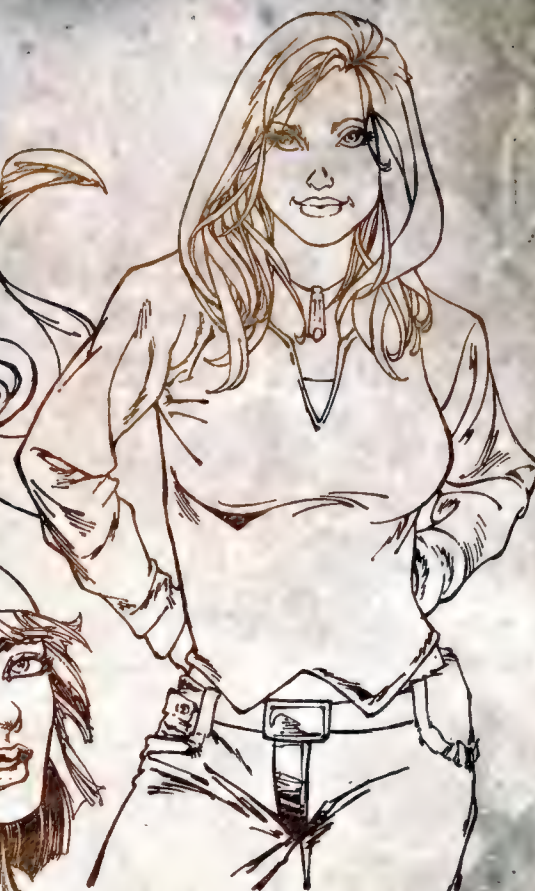
EARLY CHARACTER DESIGNS
BY ERIC BATTLE

BATTLE



JONATHON

After months of constant bad mouthing about his dad by his mom, JONATHON GRIFFIN still thinks his father can do no wrong. But when GRIFFIN needs to pull out all the stops to defend his son from The Scourge taking over Manhattan... well there are some things a young kid just shouldn't see.



ALI COLE

ALI COLE is JONATHON's 24 year old third grade teacher who was chaperoning the class trip to a Broadway show -- a sweet and spunky young woman who, GRIFFIN discovers, is more of an asset when the outbreak starts than he first realizes.

A science teacher, she doles out things about the victims of the virus that GRIFFIN, as a man of action, can not. Despite all the horror around her, ALI is always acutely aware that GRIFFIN is brave and rugged and, well, single.

The
SCOURGE

AN ALL NEW ASPEN
SIX ISSUE MINI-SERIES
TAKING OVER
STARTING THIS AUGUST!





The SCOURGE

#1
OF 6
COVER A



B2
C1
LEO



#1

OF 6
COVER B

The SCOURGE



NICK
2009 P
[Signature]

The SCOURGE™

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MY NAME IS
JOHN GRIFFIN.

I'VE BEEN AN
OFFICER IN THE NYPD
FOR FIFTEEN YEARS,
SEVEN AS A MEMBER
OF A SWAT TEAM.

GUN FIGHTS,
SNIPER FIRE.

DISARMING SMOKING
CAR BOMBS ON A
CROWDED STREET.

NEGOTIATING WITH
ZEALOTS HOLDING
HOSTAGES.

UP UNTIL A MONTH
AGO I BELIEVED I HAD
SEEN EVERYTHING—
THAT NOTHING COULD
RATTLE ME.

THAT WAS UNTIL
I HAD TO SAY
GOOD-BYE TO
MY SON ON THE
COURTROOM
STEPS.

BEFORE I SAW HIM CRYING
AND WAVING GOOD-BYE FROM
THE REAR WINDOW OF THE
LIMO DRIVING HIM AND HIS
MOM TO A NEW LIFE.

FOR WEEKS I
TRIED TO PRETEND
IT DIDN'T MATTER.

FORTUNATELY FOR ME-- MY BEST FRIEND KNEW BETTER.

HE CONVINCED ME I NEEDED TO GET OUT OF NEW YORK CITY FOR A WHILE.

OKAY, I WAS SKEPTICAL.

WHEN YOU SAID WE SHOULD COME TO EUROPE-- TO CLEAR MY HEAD-- I THOUGHT YOU WERE CRAZY.

I THOUGHT I'D MISS THE PERPS, PERVERTS AND PUNKS ON MY JOB.

BUT THIS WAS A GREAT IDEA, NEWBURGH.

THE ARDECHE REGION OF FRANCE COULDN'T BE FARTHER AWAY FROM THE CHAOS OF MANHATTAN'S CONCRETE CANYONS.

WHICH IS EXACTLY WHY WE'VE BEEN HERE FOR THE PAST WEEK.

WHEN I'M RIGHT, I'M RIGHT, GRIFFIN.

I'M NOT AFRAID TO ADMIT IT.

THE MAN DANGLING FROM THE SIDE OF THE CLIFFS?

HE'S DR. PETER NEWBURGH. A DENTIST...

YOU'RE SURE AS HELL AFRAID OF SOMETHING, THOUGH.

FALLING MAYBE?

...AND THE AFOREMENTIONED BEST FRIEND.

TRADITIONALLY, DENTISTS AREN'T NEARLY AS BRAVE AS COPS.

I'LL BE RIGHT THERE, LT. GRIFFIN, SIR!

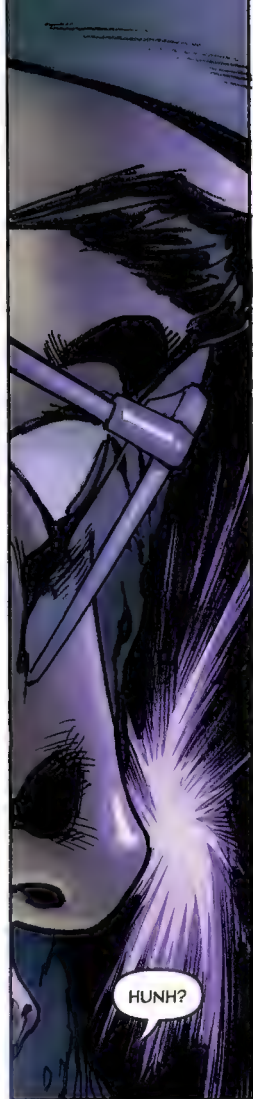


PICK IT UP, PETER...

...THESE BREWS AREN'T GOING TO DRINK THEMSELVES!



PANT PANT...



HUNH?



PROBABLY
NOTHING,
BUT...

...IF I CAN
SQUEEZE
THROUGH THIS
CREVICE-- I CAN
CHECK OUT
THAT LIGHT!



BUDDY, YOU'LL NEVER GUESS WHERE I AM RIGHT NOW.

I CAN SEE YOU RIGHT NOW! ON GOOGLE EARTH!



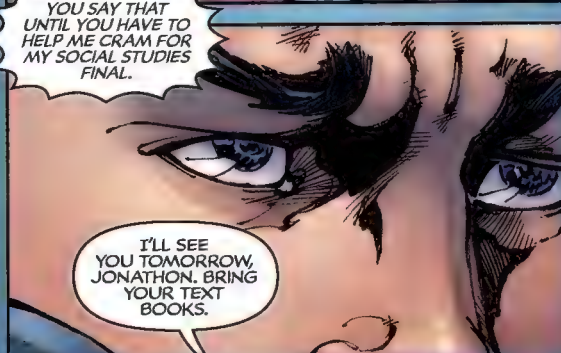
ARE YOU PULLING MY LEG?

NOPE! PLAIN AS DAY, DAD!

THAT IS YOU WITH A BEARD HERDING SHEEP, RIGHT?



HAHA! LESS COMEDY, MORE STUDY, MISTER.



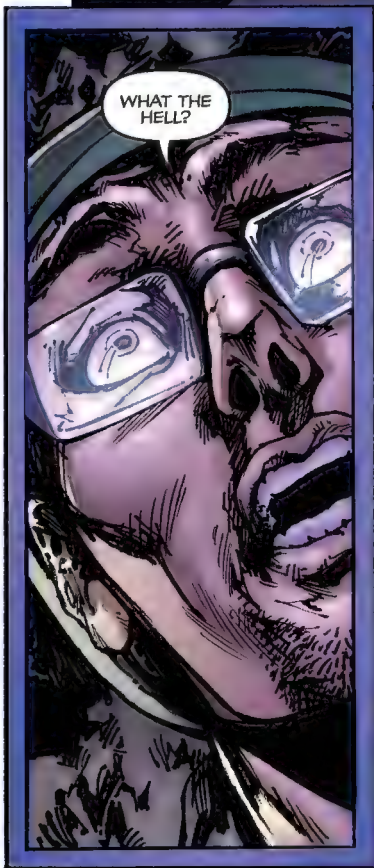
YOU SAY THAT UNTIL YOU HAVE TO HELP ME CRAM FOR MY SOCIAL STUDIES FINAL.

I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW, JONATHAN. BRING YOUR TEXT BOOKS.



BYE, DAD. I LOVE YOU.

LOVE YOU HARDER, KID. BYE.



WHAT THE HELL?



THIS P-PLACE
ALMOST FEELS...
ALIVE?

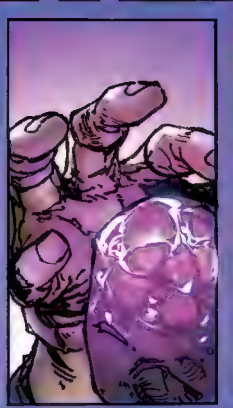
BUT THAT'S
CRAZY, ISN'T
IT?



ARE THOSE
STONES...

... OR
SOME KIND
OF... EGG?

I SHOULD
GET THE HELL
OUT OF HERE,
BUT...



...WHAT
THE-- ?!



ACHEM

COME ON,
DOC.
NOW YOU'RE
JUST BEING
RUDE.



NEWBURGH?

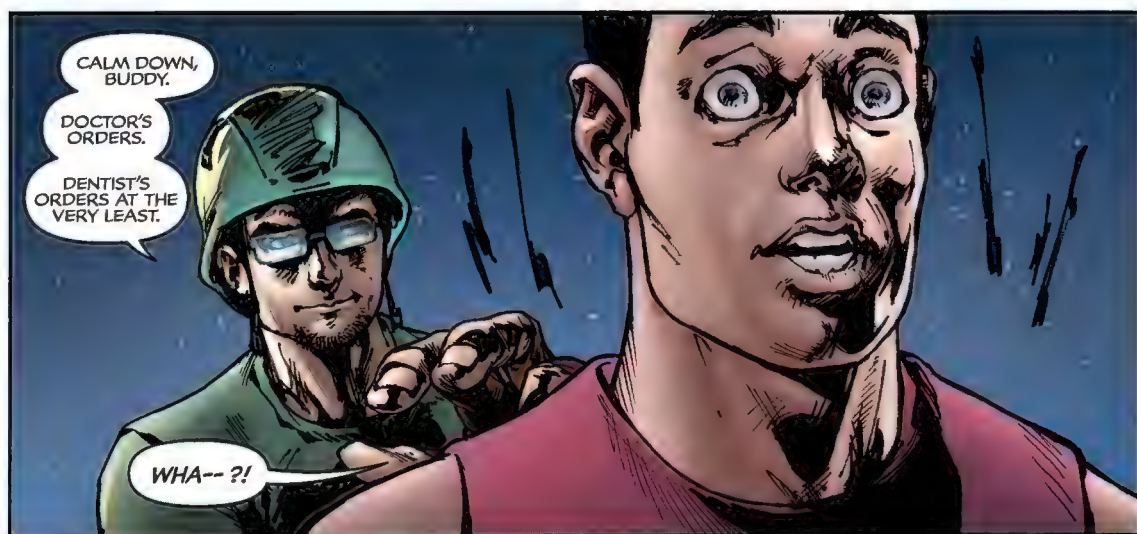
WHERE ARE
YOU?

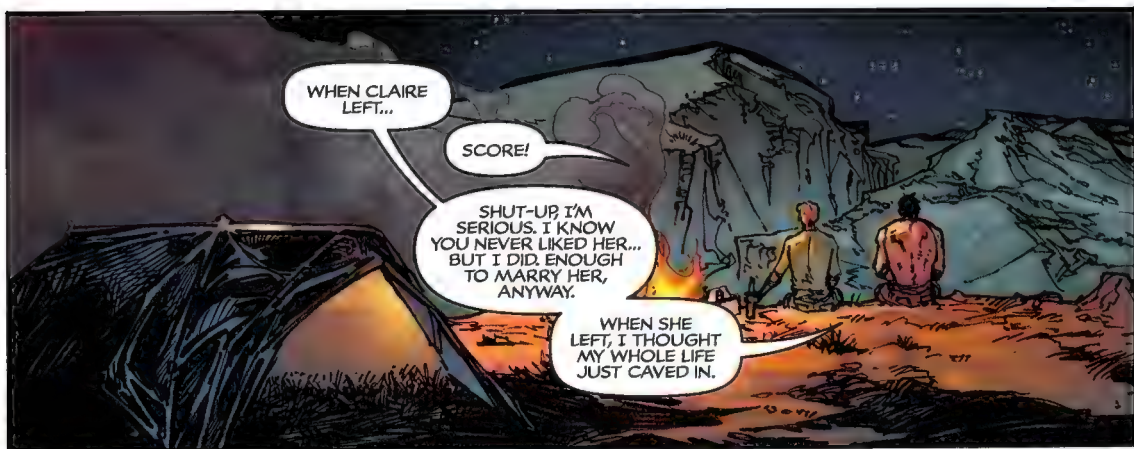


PETE?!



NEWBURGH?!





WHEN CLAIRE LEFT...

SCORE!

SHUT-UP, I'M SERIOUS. I KNOW YOU NEVER LIKED HER... BUT I DID ENOUGH TO MARRY HER, ANYWAY.

WHEN SHE LEFT, I THOUGHT MY WHOLE LIFE JUST CAVED IN.



BUT YOU WERE THERE TO PICK ME UP OFF THE FLOOR.

TO REMIND ME I HAD A LIFE BEFORE HER. THAT I HAD TO HOLD IT TOGETHER FOR JONATHON'S SAKE.



YEAH, YEAH-- I EXPECT THE SAME TREATMENT IF MY WIFE EVER LEAVES ME.

YOU KNOW, IF I EVER FIND SOMEONE LONELY ENOUGH TO ACTUALLY MARRY ME.

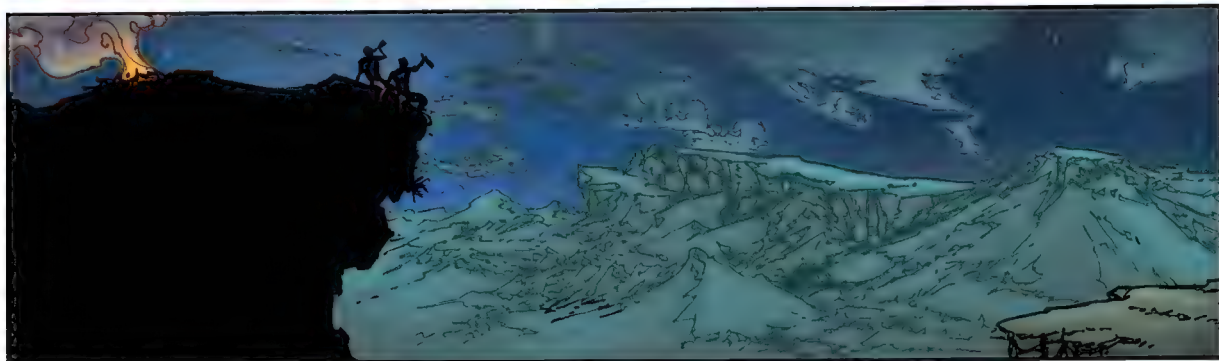
JOKE, IF YOU HAVE TO.

I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW I APPRECIATE IT.



OKAY, WELL-- IF YOU'RE SERIOUS...

...THEN YOU'RE WELCOME.



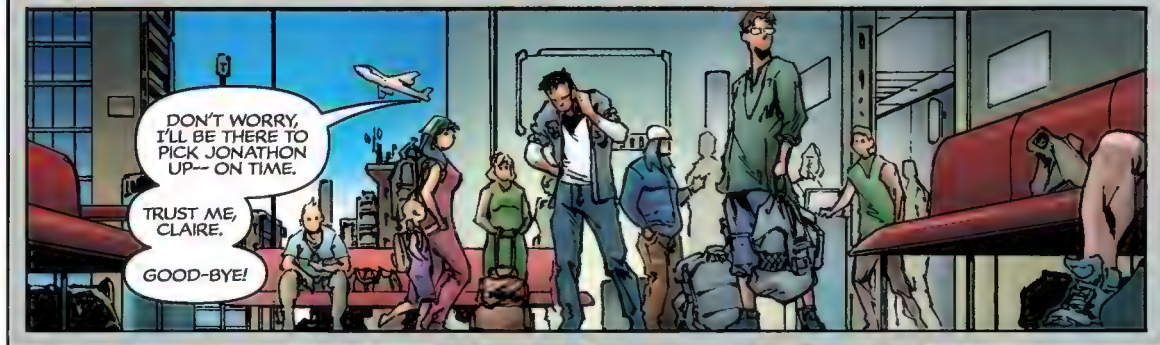


A FEW HOURS AND HALF
A WORLD AWAY...

SPECIFICALLY, IN
CLAIRE'S NEW DIGS...

THOUGH I HAVE
NO IDEA WHY, YOUR
SON IS ACTUALLY
EXCITED ABOUT
SEEING YOU.

BUT IF YOU'RE NOT
GOING TO MAKE IT TO THE
THEATER TOMORROW, GRIFF,
I CAN ARRANGE TO HAVE ONE
OF THE DRIVERS PICK
HIM UP.



DON'T WORRY,
I'LL BE THERE TO
PICK JONATHAN
UP-- ON TIME.

TRUST ME,
CLAIRE.

GOOD-BYE!



THAT
"WOMAN"...

I WAS
THINKING,
BUDDY.

WHAT IF
WE DON'T GO
BACK TO THE
STATES?

THERE ARE A TON
OF TEETH THAT NEED
FIXING HERE--

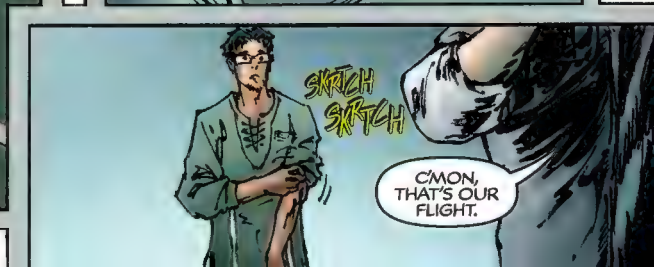
--AND I'M SURE
YOU CAN USE ALL
THAT SWAT TRAINING
TO PUT DOWN A
REBELLION OR TWO.

WHAT IF WE
JUST STAY
HERE?



NOW
BOARDING,
FLIGHT 203
TO JFK.

YOU'RE AN
IDIOT.



SKRICH
SKRICH

C'MON,
THAT'S OUR
FLIGHT.



I WOULD HAVE BEEN JUST AS HAPPY IN COACH.

NO ONE IS REMOTELY HAPPY IN COACH, GRIFFIN.

AFTER YEARS OF STUDY AND MORE IMPACTED WISDOM EXTRACTIONS THAN I CAN COUNT, YOUR BEST BUD HAS MONEY.

ENJOY IT!



CAN I GET YOU ANYTHING ELSE?

I'D LIKE ANOTHER 7 AND 7 AND MY FRIEND HERE WILL HAVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS.

IF ONLY, I'M AFRAID THAT'S AGAINST--

IGNORE HIM, PLEASE.



IF YOU CAN'T BRING YOURSELF TO FLIRT, I'LL HAVE TO DO IT FOR YOU.



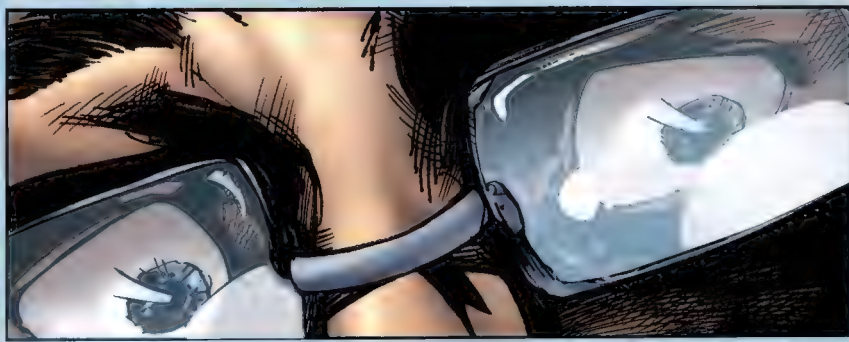
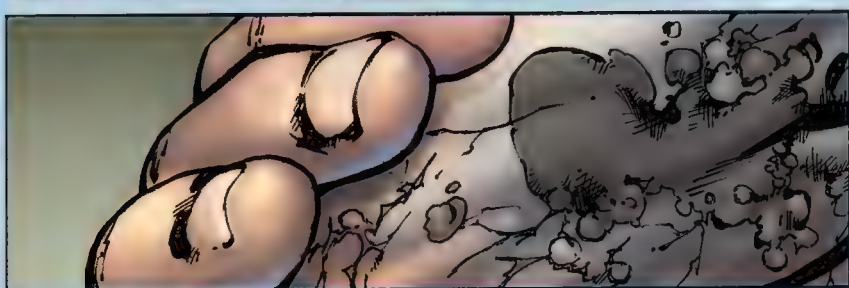
ENOUGH DRINKING, TALKING, EVERYTHING...

...WE WERE UP ALL NIGHT COMING DOWN THAT MOUNTAIN...

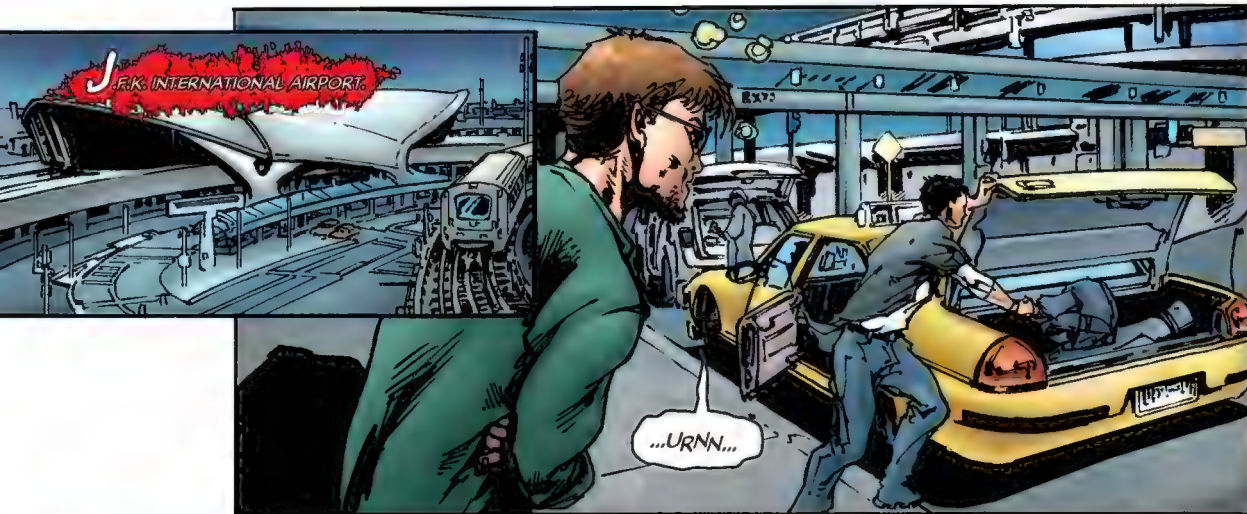
WAY AHEAD OF YOU, BUDDY.

NAWNIES!











CAN'T YOU DRIVE THIS CRATE ANY FASTER?

THAT DEPENDS--- DO YOU GOT AN EXTRA SIREN UP YOUR BUTT?

OFFICER?



GRIFF... I'M S--SORRY.

DON'T BE STUPID, YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG.

IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT YOU---



WHY DIDN'T I TELL YOU?!

I SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU!

TELL ME WHAT? PETE, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?



SO...SO... SORRY.

SO...

SHHHH, JUST REST.

SHHHH...



DRIVER, WE NEED TO GET HIM TO A HOSPITAL NOW!

ARRRRRGH!

YA' THINK?!





JUST LIKE THAT,
IT SEEMS...

...HIS EVERY
HOPE...

...EVERY
DREAM...

...EVERY JOKE
AND EVERY
PRAYER...

...EVERYTHING
THAT EVER WAS
OR WOULD EVER
BE DR. PETER
NEWBURGH...

...WAS
GONE.

FOREVER?





KREESKK

...YOUR
FRIEND HERE
TOTALLY HAS
HIS FREAK
ON!

TO BE CONTINUED IN...
THE SCOURGE #2



The SCOURGE

#2

OF 6
COVER A





#2

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Alex
KONAT
1/2/06

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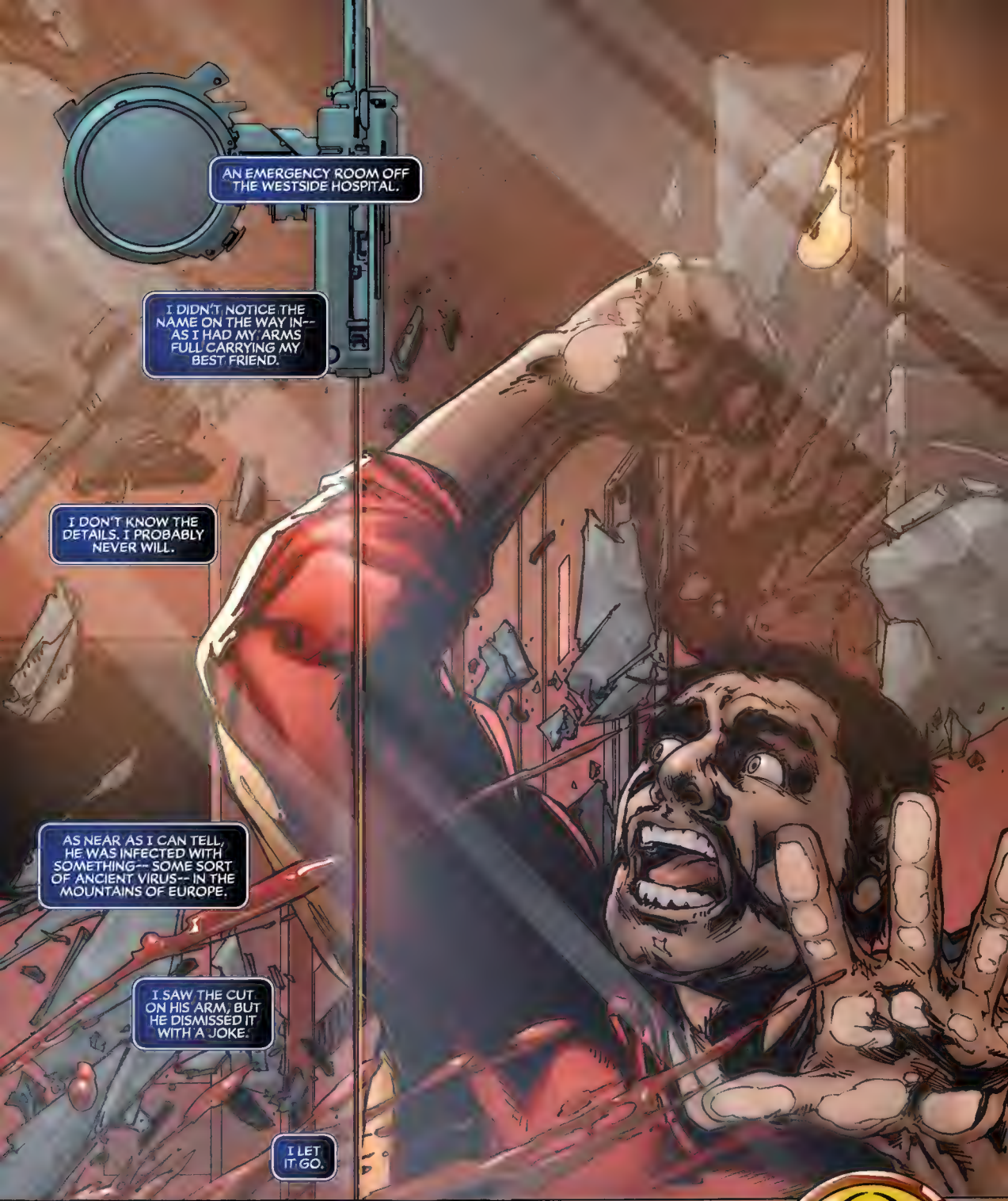


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AN EMERGENCY ROOM OFF
THE WESTSIDE HOSPITAL.

I DIDN'T NOTICE THE
NAME ON THE WAY IN--
AS I HAD MY ARMS
FULL CARRYING MY
BEST FRIEND.

I DON'T KNOW THE
DETAILS. I PROBABLY
NEVER WILL.

AS NEAR AS I CAN TELL,
HE WAS INFECTED WITH
SOMETHING-- SOME SORT
OF ANCIENT VIRUS-- IN THE
MOUNTAINS OF EUROPE.

I SAW THE CUT
ON HIS ARM, BUT
HE DISMISSED IT
WITH A JOKE.

I LET
IT GO.





NOW... THIS.

HE'S BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO THIS... MONSTER.

HE KILLED THE ORDERLY AND THE NURSE WITHOUT BATTING AN EYE.

BEFORE I COULD DO ANYTHING TO STOP HIM.

IF, HONESTLY... THAT'S EVEN POSSIBLE.

HRRRAOUGHR

STEP BACK, DOCTOR...

...UNTIL WE KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED TO...

...MY FRIEND.

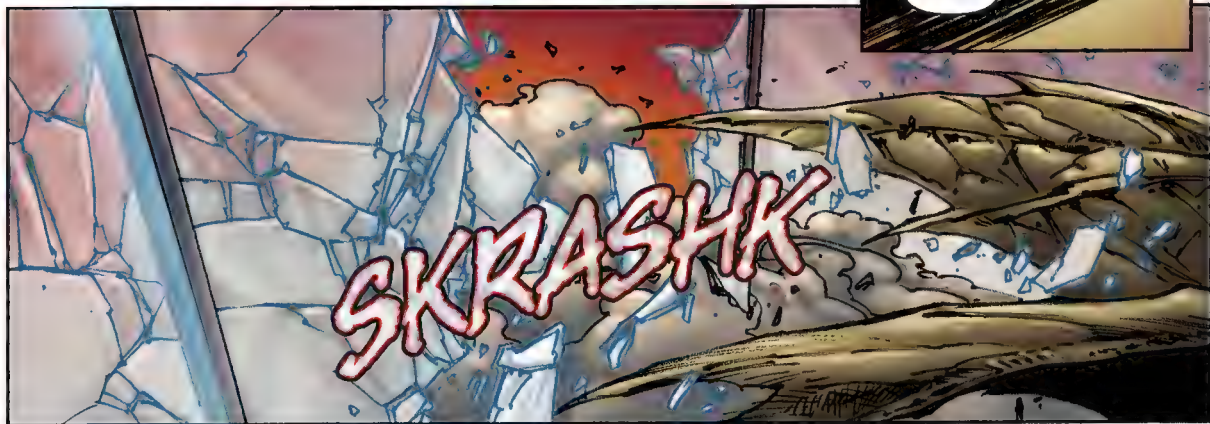
THERE'S NOT MUCH OF A MYSTERY. THE PATIENT TRANSFORMED RIGHT IN FRONT OF OUR EYES INTO-- THAT!

COME ON! WHERE THE HELL IS EVERYBODY?!

BAM

BAM

BAM







HOLY MARY,
MOTHER OF--

NOT THAT IT
DOES THEM
ANY GOOD.



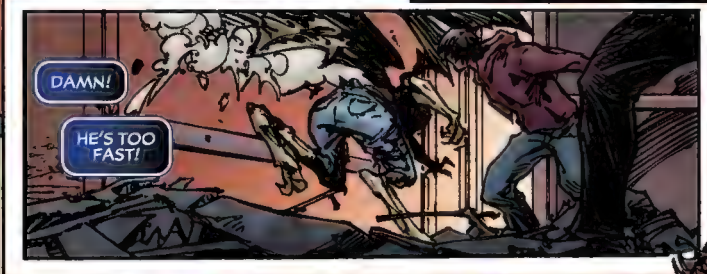
INSTEAD OF
KILLING HIM...

...ALL THEY'VE
DONE IS PISS
HIM OFF.

SLISSSSSSSS

NEWBURGH!

SHRASSH



DAMN!

HE'S TOO
FAST!



DUDE,
THAT AIN'T NO
NEWBURGH.
THERE'S
NO THERE,
THERE.

I GET IT.

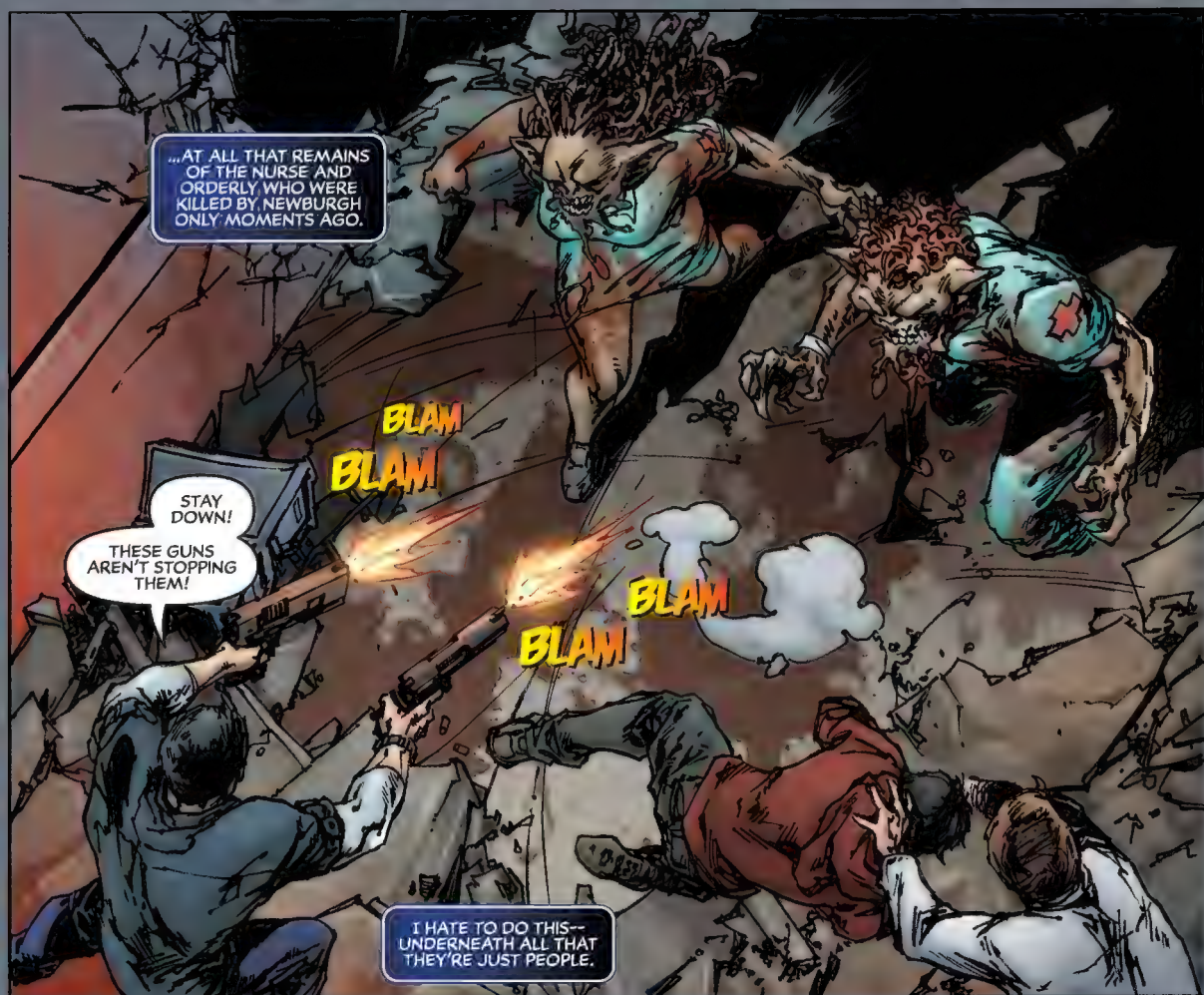
I LEAP FOR THE
GUNS THE GUARDS
WERE HOLDING...



HIT THE
FLOOR--
NOW!

WHAT
THE--?!

...AND COME
UP FIRING...



...AT ALL THAT REMAINS
OF THE NURSE AND
ORDERLY WHO WERE
KILLED BY NEWBURGH
ONLY MOMENTS AGO.

STAY
DOWN!

THESE GUNS
AREN'T STOPPING
THEM!

I HATE TO DO THIS--
UNDERNEATH ALL THAT
THEY'RE JUST PEOPLE.



WHATEVER
YOU'RE DOING-- IT
AIN'T WORKING!

BETWEEN ME AND THE
GUARDS, ALL THE HEAD
SHOTS WERE USELESS.



I AIM FOR THE
JUGULAR VEIN IN
THE SOFT PART
OF THE NECK
INSTEAD.



IT WORKS.

OKAY... THAT
WAS REALLY
MESSED UP.

DOCTOR, IF
YOU HAVE ANY
THEORY...?

NO MATTER
HOW CRAZY IT
MIGHT SOUND--
I'D LIKE TO
HEAR IT.



WHATEVER
CONTAGION THAT
INFECTED YOUR
FRIEND...?

IT MIGHT HAVE
TAKEN DAYS OR HOURS
TO INCUBATE-- TO
ADAPT TO THE HUMAN
BODY-- IN ORDER TO
TRANSFORM IT.

B-BUT NOW
THIS "VIRUS" HAS A
ROADMAP. IT KNOWS
HOW IT IS DONE...

WHAT ARE
YOU SAYING?!

GET SCRATCHED
BY ONE OF THOSE
THINGS-- AND BEFORE
YOU KNOW IT YOU'RE
ONE OF THEM?

YOU SAW IT FOR
YOURSELF.

THE SECOND
GENERATION OF THIS
INFECTION ONLY TOOK
MOMENTS TO WORK
THROUGH A BODY.

HOW DO WE
STOP THIS OUTBREAK
FROM SPREADING?

I... DON'T
THINK YOU
CAN.

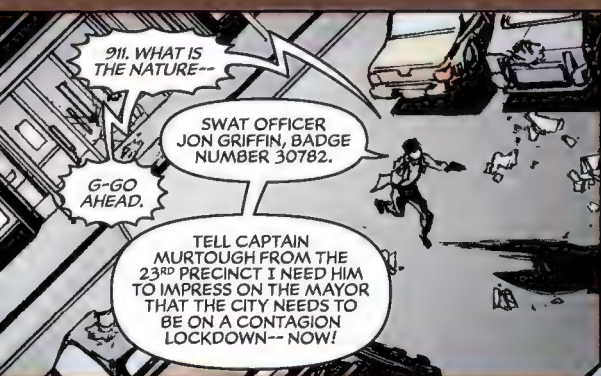
I DON'T
ACCEPT
THAT.

OFFICER, YOU
SHOULDN'T GO
ANYWHERE!

THIS WHOLE
HOSPITAL NEEDS TO
BE QUARANTINED!

MORE LIKE
THE WHOLE
CITY, DOC!

LET'S GET OUT OF
HERE BEFORE THOSE
GUARDS BOUNCE
BACK UP!



911. WHAT IS THE NATURE--

SWAT OFFICER
JON GRIFFIN, BADGE
NUMBER 30782.

G-GO
AHEAD.

TELL CAPTAIN
MURTOUGH FROM THE
23RD PRECINCT I NEED HIM
TO IMPRESS ON THE MAYOR
THAT THE CITY NEEDS TO
BE ON A CONTAGION
LOCKDOWN-- NOW!



SIR, I
DON'T HAVE
THE PROPER
AUTHORITY
TO--

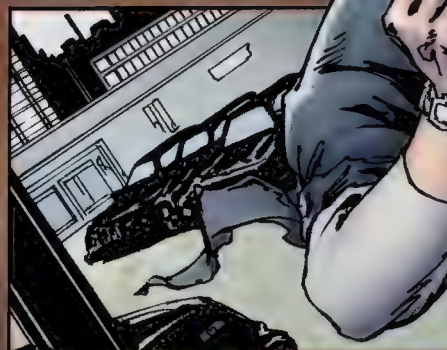
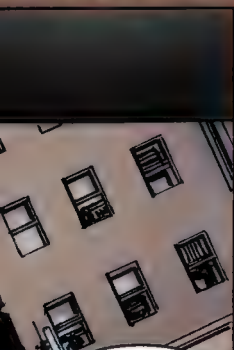
I KNOW YOU
DON'T AND I DON'T
HAVE TIME TO
EXPLAIN!

BUT TELL HIM
AS NEAR AS I CAN TELL,
IN THE NEXT HOUR EVERY
MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD IN
MANHATTAN IS IN DANGER
OF CONTAMINATION!

ALL TRAINS,
BUSES, CARS--
BRIDGES,
TUNNELS...

...NEED TO BE
LOCKED DOWN
IMMEDIATELY!

NO ONE
IN! NO ONE
OUT!



TELL HIM TO
CALL THE C.D.C.,
HOMELAND
SECURITY OR
OBAMA AT
HOME!

BUT DO IT--
NOW!

W-WHAT
SHOULD I TELL HIM
IS THE NATURE OF
THE EMERGENCY,
OFFICER GRIFFIN?



TELL
THEM...

...THE END OF
THE WORLD.

WHY?

WHY IS
THAT BUS JUST
IDLING?



FREEZE,
POLICE!

PUT YOUR
WEAPONS
DOWN!

NOW, OR WE
WILL SHOOT!



DO YOU
HEAR ME?!

SHHHH...



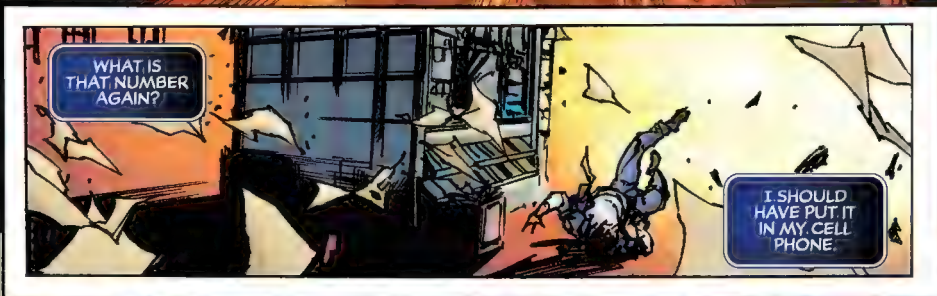
THERE ARE WAY MORE OF THESE THINGS THAN THERE ARE BULLETS!

BLAM
BLAM

BLAM
BLAM

BLAM

NEED TO IGNITE THE GAS TANK-- OBLITERATE THEM ALL AT ONCE!



WHAT IS
THAT NUMBER
AGAIN?

I SHOULD
HAVE PUT IT
IN MY CELL
PHONE.



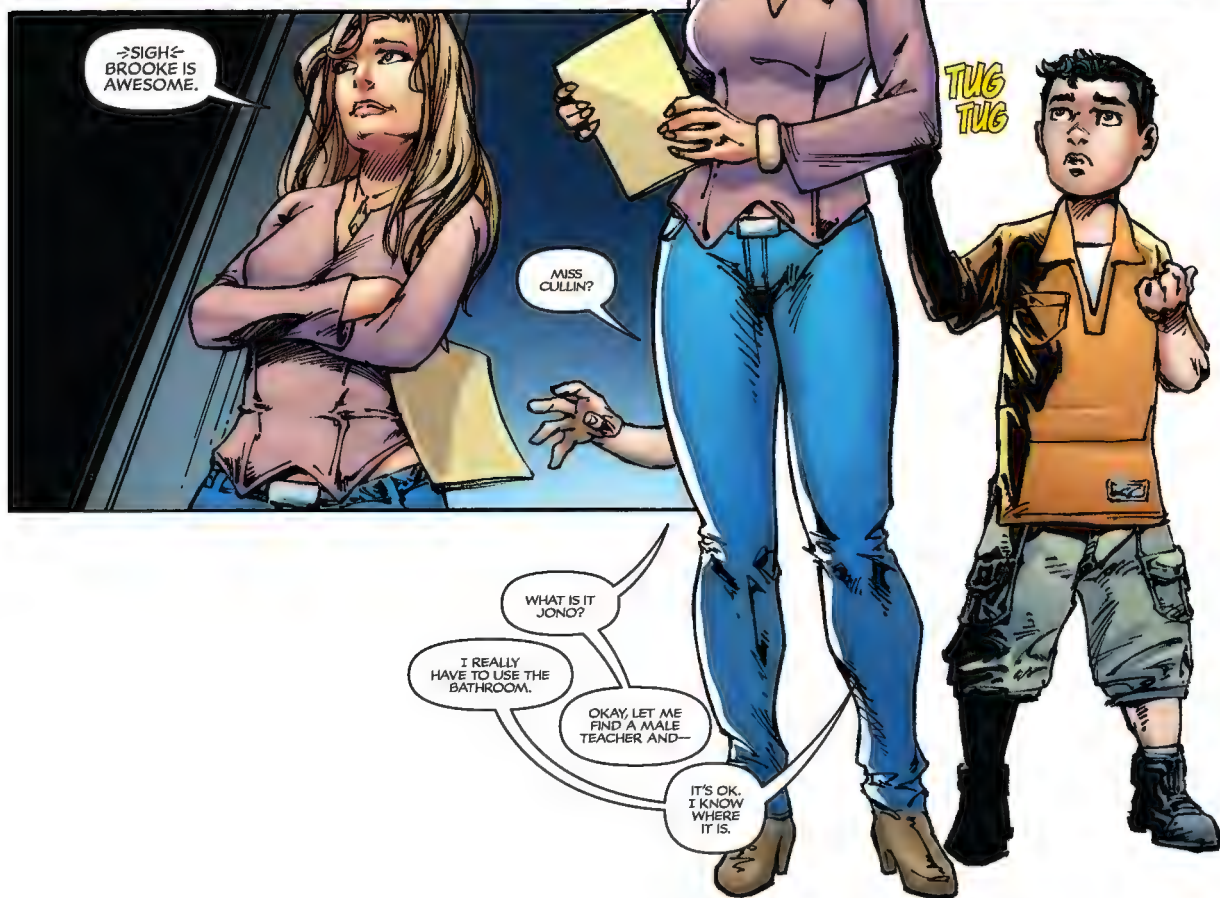
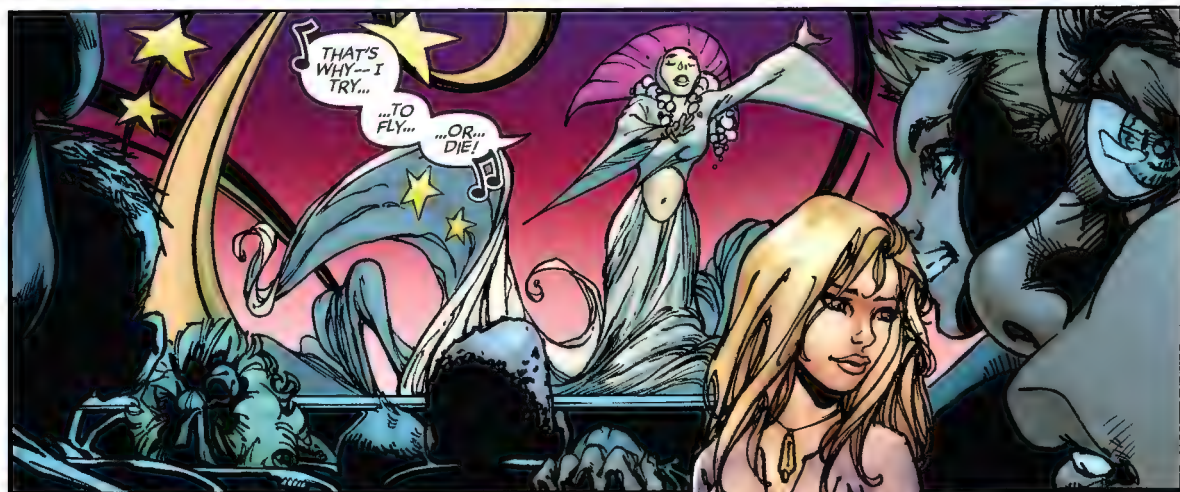
brrrr
brrrr

HELLO?

CLAIRE,
IT'S ME.

WHA--?!
GRIFFIN, WHY ARE
YOU CALLING ME
NOW?

YOU'RE SUPPOSED
TO BE MEETING
JONATHAN OUTSIDE
OF THE THEATER IN...
EIGHT MINUTES!





I'LL
CALL YOU
BACK--

DON'T YOU
DARE HANG UP
ON ME AG--!

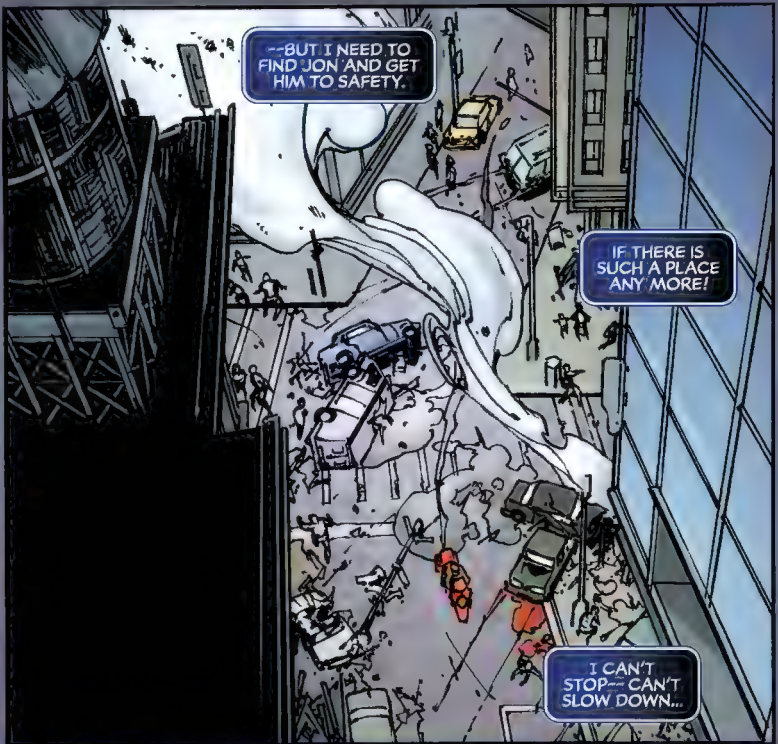
THAT WAS MORE
SATISFYING THAN
I WOULD HAVE
IMAGINED.*

*THESE EVENTS TAKE PLACE
AFTER THE SCOURGE #0.



WHO AM I KIDDING?
I CAN'T EVEN JOKE
ABOUT IT TO MYSELF.

THE CITY IS BEING TORN
APART AT THE SEAMS...



--BUT I NEED TO
FIND JON AND GET
HIM TO SAFETY.

IF THERE IS
SUCH A PLACE
ANY MORE!

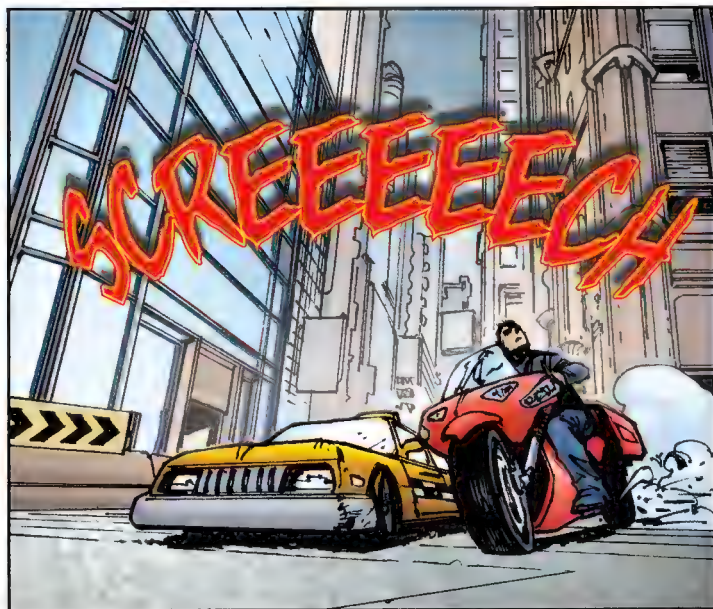
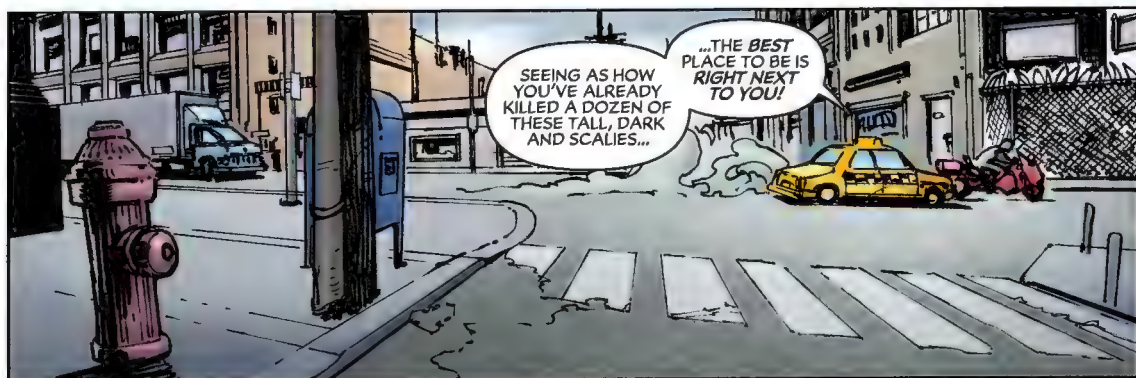
I CAN'T
STOP-- CAN'T
SLOW DOWN...



...OR I'LL BE
INFECTED,
TOO.

BACK OFF,
FREAK!

THEN I WON'T
BE OF USE TO
ANYONE!

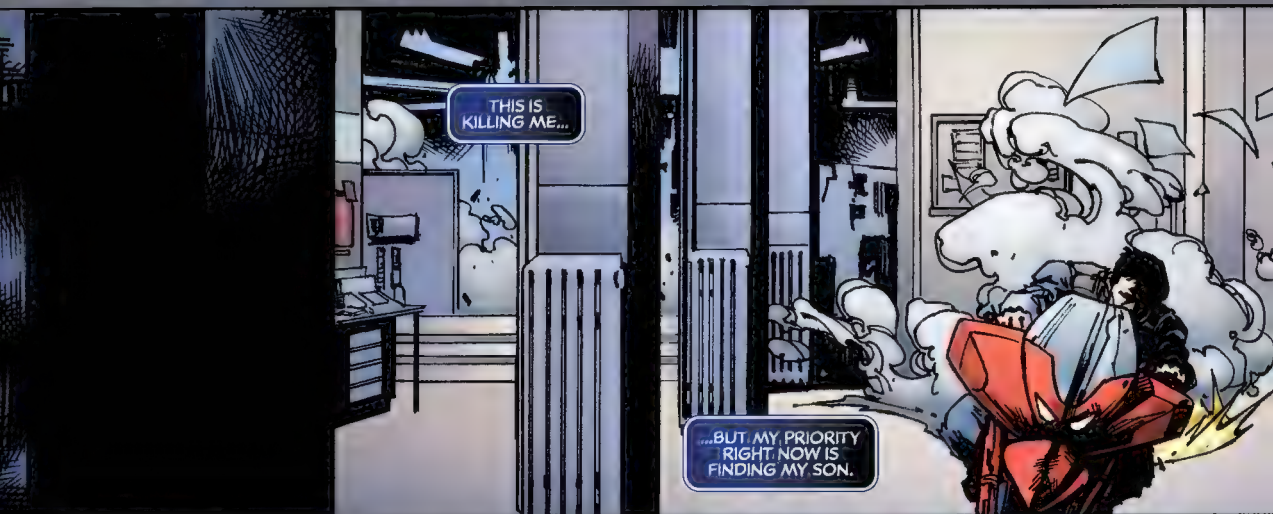




THEY JUST KEEP
MAKING MORE...

...AND MORE
OF THEM.



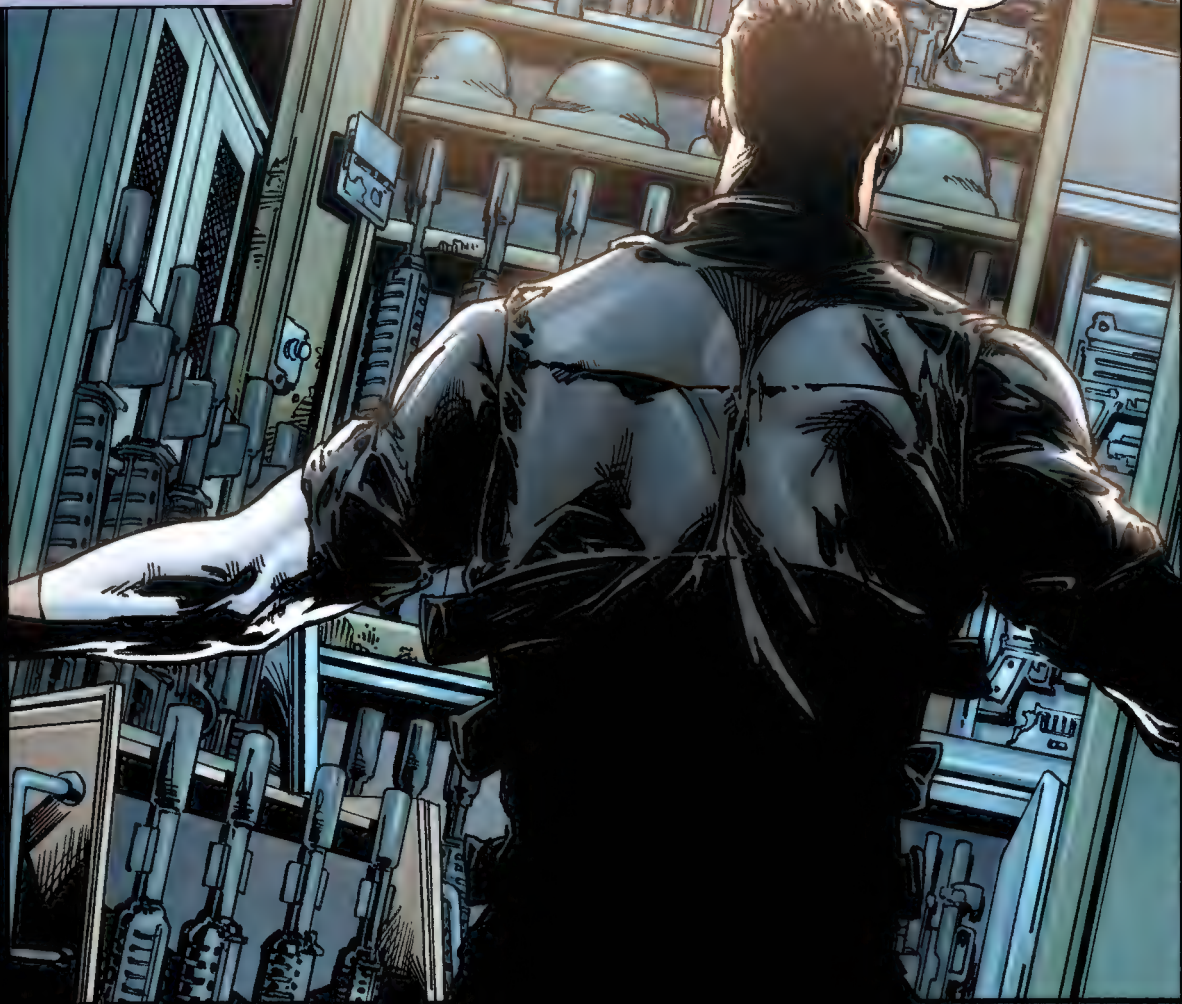


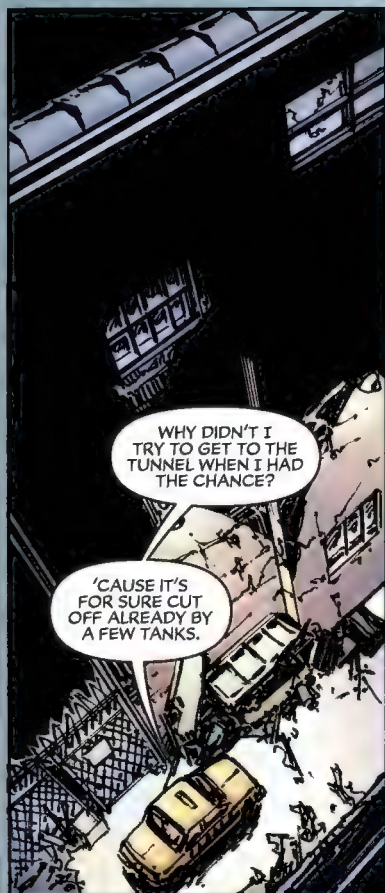
IF I'M GOING TO
PULL THIS OFF--
I NEED BACK UP.

THE ONLY KIND I
CAN DEPEND ON.

HARDWARE.

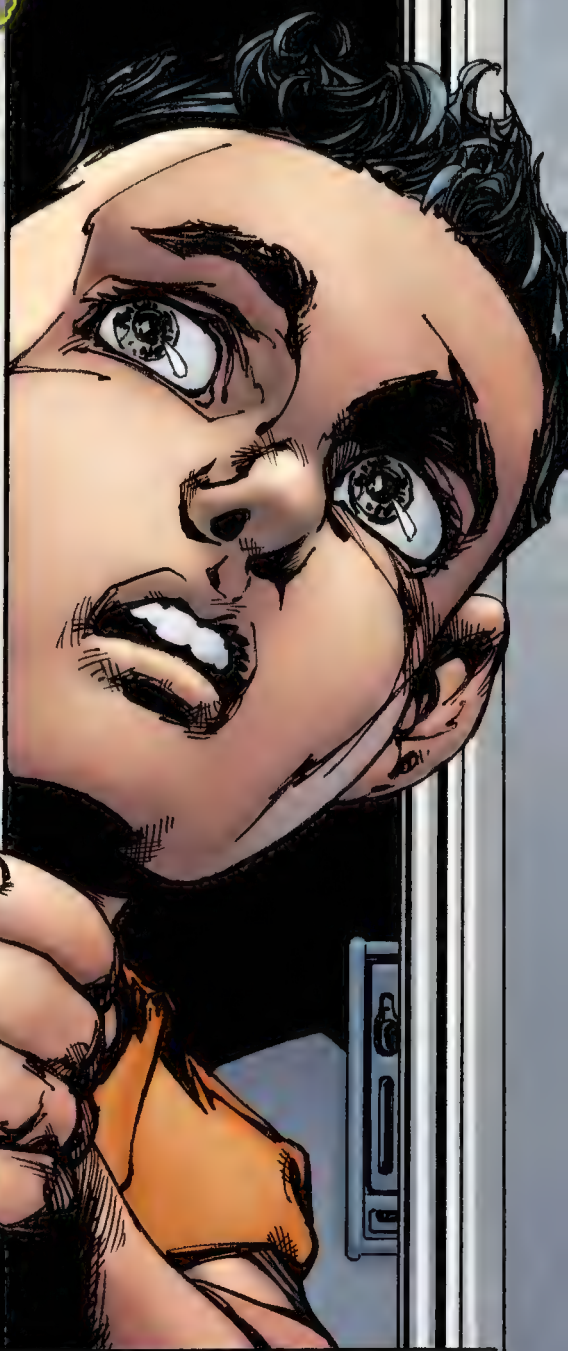
HELLO,
GIRLS.





WRRRRNT

HELLO?



IS ANYONE
THERE?



TO BE CONTINUED IN...
THE SCOURGE #3



#3

OF 6

COVER A

The SCOURGE



BATTLE
2010



#3

OF 6
COVER B

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Issue 3 of 6

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NYPD!

I NEED
EVERYONE
TO MOVE TO THE
BACKSTAGE OF
THE THEATER!

DO NOT
PANIC. IF YOU
DO EXACTLY AS
I SAY YOU'LL
BE FINE...

...BUT YOU NEED
TO DO EXACTLY
WHAT I SAY!

YEAH,
RIGHT.

HAS IT REALLY
BEEN LESS THAN
AN HOUR?

AS NEAR AS I CAN TELL,
MY BEST FRIEND BROUGHT
BACK SOME KIND OF A
DISEASE-- A VIRUS-- FROM
OUR VACATION IN EUROPE.

ONE MINUTE HE
WAS DR. PETER
NEWBURGH,
DENTIST.

THE NEXT, HE WAS PATIENT
ZERO IN AN OUTBREAK
THAT HAS TRANSFORMED
INNOCENT PEOPLE INTO...

NEW
FREAKING
YORK.

...EVEN NOW, I'M NOT QUITE SURE WHAT TO CALL THEM!

THE DOCTOR TRIED TO EXPLAIN IT TO ME-- SOME SORT OF HYPER-THYROIDAL TRANSUBSTANTIVATIVE SOMETHING OR OTHER.

I DON'T PRETEND TO UNDERSTAND THE DETAILS.

AS NEAR AS I CAN TELL, ONE SCRATCH OR BITE FROM THESE THINGS IS ALL IT TAKES TO START THE CHANGE.

WITH NEWBURGH, IT TOOK HOURS. BUT WITH EACH GENERATION OF INFECTION IT HAPPENS FASTER AND FASTER.

I'LL EXPLAIN WHEN EVERYONE IS SAFE.

RIGHT NOW I NEED YOU TO MOVE TO THE CAGED AREA WHERE THE SETS ARE KEPT.

CALMLY AND QUICKLY!

WHO IS THAT JERK?

HE'S G-GOT A GUN!

WHOA...

THAT SCREAMING FROM THE STREETS-- WHAT'S GOING ON?!!

THIS ISN'T WORKING! MOST OF THESE PEOPLE HAVE NO IDEA OF WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE.

THEY NEED
SOME MOTIVATION.
SOMETHING TO
FOCUS THEM.



JON?

JONATHON
GRIFFIN!

HAS
ANYONE
SEEN MY
SON?



HUNH?

OFFICER
GRIFFIN? YOUR
SON SAID YOU
WERE A COP.



I'M MISS
CULLEN.

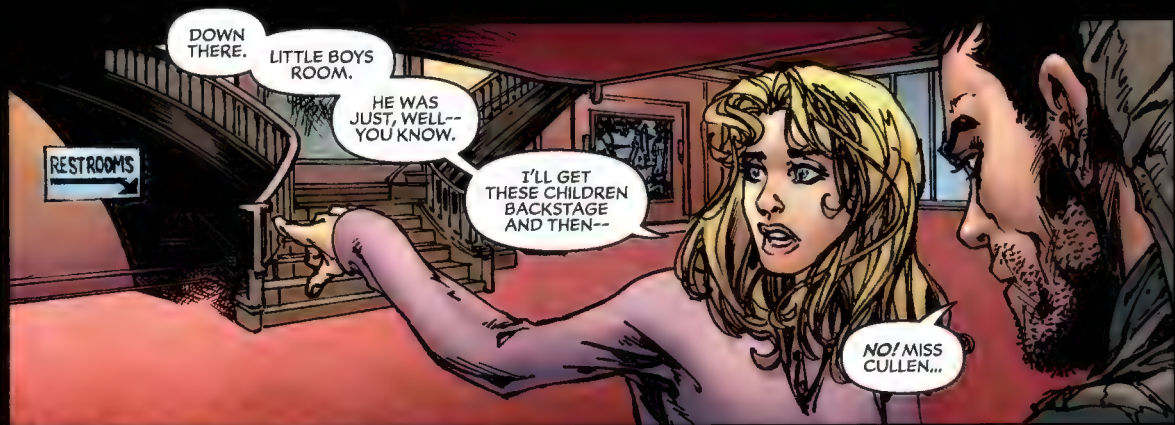
ALI, I
GUESS TO
YOU.

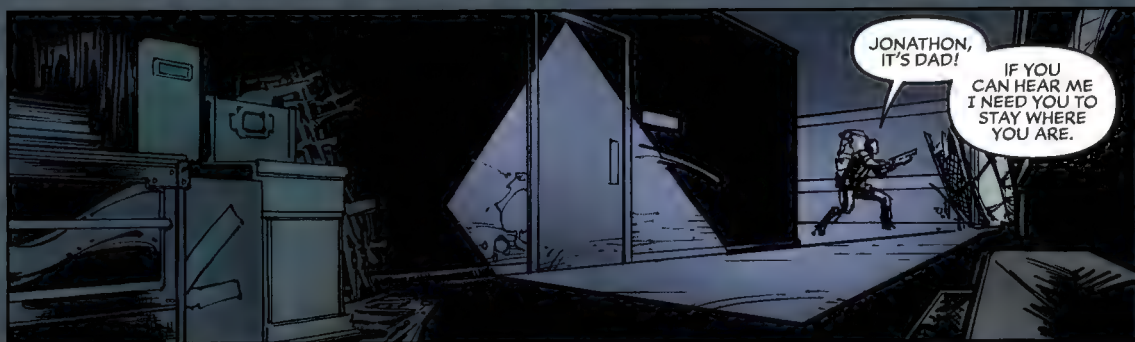
I'M YOUR
SON'S TEACHER.
WELL, SUBSTITUTE
TEACHER,
TECHNIC--

WHERE?
WHERE IS
HE?

OH, RIGHT.
RIGHT, OF
COURSE.
UM...







JONATHAN,
IT'S DAD!

IF YOU
CAN HEAR ME
I NEED YOU TO
STAY WHERE
YOU ARE.



KRAK!



DAD?

I HEARD
GUNS... AND
SCREAMING.

I HID IN
THE HALL
CLOSET
BE--



SHH!

...?!



B-B-BOOM

GET
DOWN!

DAD, WHAT
THE--?!?

IT'S OK,
JON.

YOU'RE SAFE
NOW. TAKE MY
HAND.

WHAT WAS
THAT THING,
DA--

LATER.

FOR NOW I
NEED YOU TO DO
EVERYTHING I TELL
YOU WITHOUT ASKING
ANY QUESTIONS.



NO
MATTER
WHAT YOU
SEE.

NO MATTER
HOW SCARED
YOU ARE.



YOU HAVE TO DO
EVERYTHING YOU'RE
TOLD AND I PROMISE
YOU, WE'LL GET
YOU HOME.



NOW
YOU MAKE A
PROMISE.

I'LL DO
ANYTHING
YOU SAY.

PROMISE.



THIS FAR STAIRWELL
SHOULD LEAD INTO
THE THEATER.

WITH
A LITTLE
LUCK...





THE "T" IN
S.W.A.T. STANDS
FOR TACTICS.



I SHOULDN'T EVEN
ENTER A PERIMETER
WITHOUT AN EXIT
STRATEGY.



THE ONLY
THOUGHT I
HAVE IN MY
HEAD RIGHT
NOW...



...IS TO GET MY
SON OUT OF
HERE ALIVE.

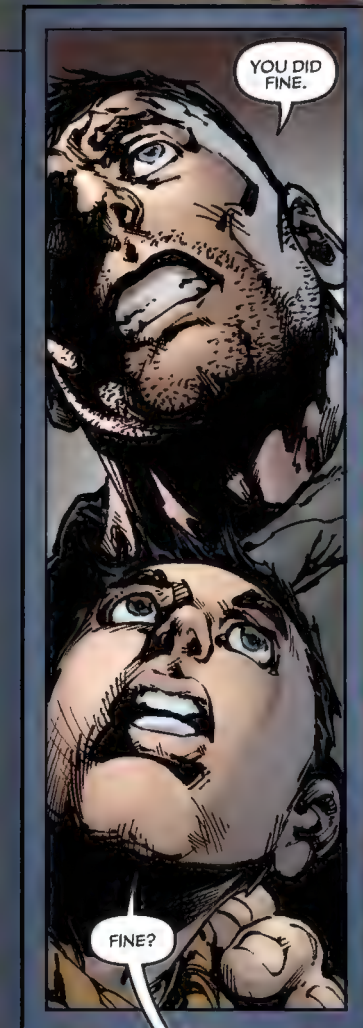
I'LL DEAL WITH
EVERYTHING ELSE
AS IT COMES.





HOPE I, UH,
DID THAT RIGHT.
THE FIRE AXE WAS
RIGHT THERE ON
THE WALL,
AND...

...IT SEEMED
YOU WERE KIND
OF FOCUSED ON
THE, UH, NECK, OR
JUGULAR VEIN, SO
I THOUGHT--

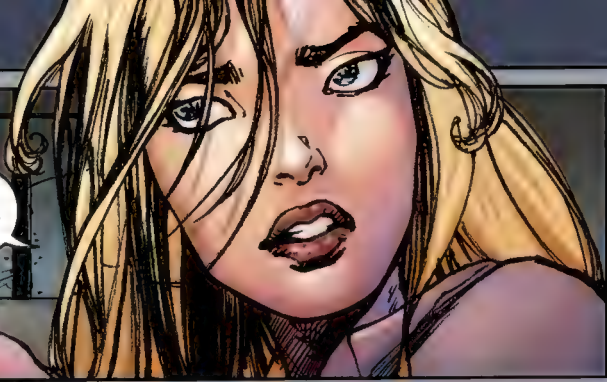


YOU DID
FINE.

FINE?

MISS CULLEN
ROCKS!





EVERYONE IS
BACK THERE, LIKE
YOU ORDERED.

ONCE
WE SAW
THOSE-- UM--
THINGS...



"...EVERYONE
RUSHED AS FAR BACK
INTO THE CAGE AS
THEY COULD, HIDING
BEHIND THE SETS.



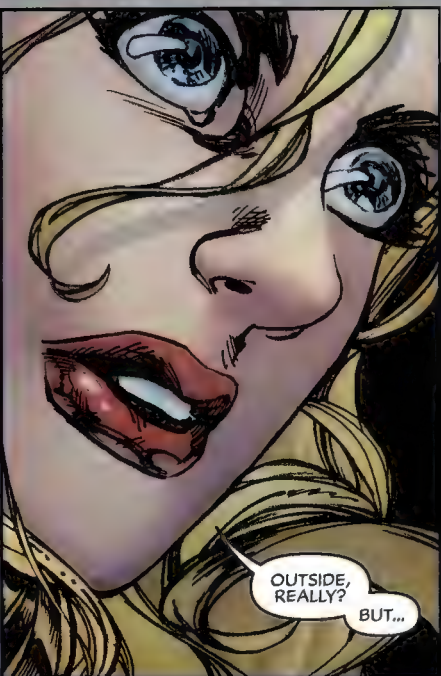
"I LOCKED
THEM INSIDE AND
CAME TO CHECK
ON YOU AND
JONATHAN."



THEY'RE
SAFE FOR THE
MOMENT.

WE CAN'T
RISK DRAWING
ANY ATTENTION
TO THEM.

THIS
WAY!



...ISN'T THAT
WHERE THOSE
THINGS CAME
FROM?

...OR NOT.
THERE'S NOBODY
OUT HERE.

OUTSIDE,
REALLY?
BUT...



DAMMIT, HE
SAID HE'D WAIT
FOR ME.



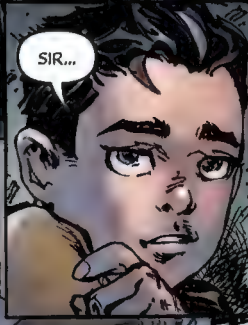
SOMEBODY
CALL A CAB?

ASTOR,
ALI AND
JON.

ALI
AND JON,
ASTOR.



A PLEASURE.



SIR...

WE'RE OUT
OF THERE.

NOW FOR THE
SECOND PART
OF THE PLAN.

ANY
SUGGESTIONS,
OFFICER?

SCREECH



KRUUKT

KEEP.
DRIVING.





OFFICER,
WHERE THE HELL
IS EVERYONE?

THOSE THAT
DIDN'T GET
AWAY...

...ARE
INFECTED.

I'M GUESSING
THEY'RE OFF
KILLING PEOPLE
AT RANDOM.

EXCUSE
ME, BUT...



--WHY DO
YOU THINK IT'S
RANDOM?

UM, DAD...

MAYBE
THESE THINGS
ARE DELIBERATELY
TRYING TO MAKE
MORE THINGS.

YOU
MEAN
MAKING
BABIES?

...DAD--

JON, SIT.



WHAT
IS YOUR
THEORY,
ALI?

"THEORY" IS
TOO STRONG. IT
JUST SEEMS--

DAAAAAAD!

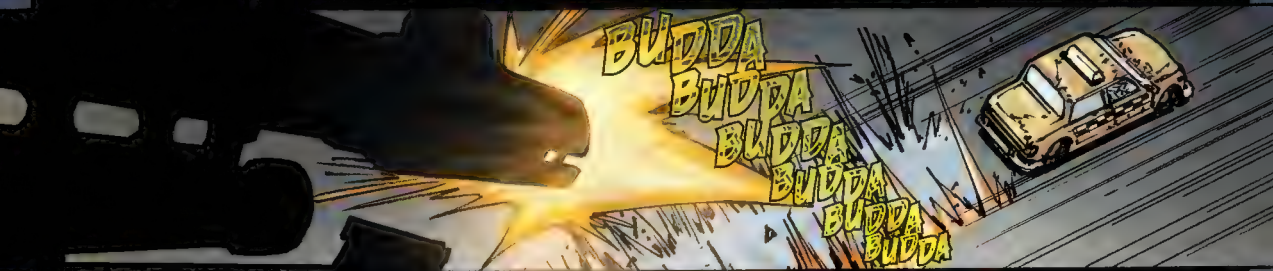
HE SAW THEM
BEFORE I DID.

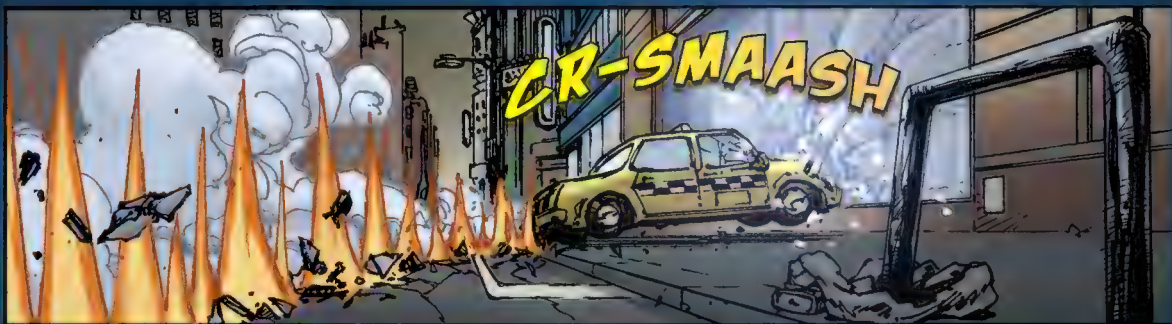
THEY DIVE
BOMB LIKE A
SQUADRON OF
FIGHTER JETS.

NOT SURE HOW
I'M GOING TO
PULL THIS OFF...



THUPPATHTHUPPATHTHUPPATHTHUPPATHTUPPA





NOT QUITE,
UM... COVER.
BUT IT WORKED--
THEY STOPPED!

MAYBE.



OR MAYBE
THEY'RE JUST
DEALING WITH
A BIGGER
PROBLEM!

I WON'T TELL THE OTHERS, BUT...

...A PART OF ME WAS HOPING WE COULD MAKE IT TO A BRIDGE OR TUNNEL AND MAKE OUR WAY OUT OF HERE.

JON, AT THE VERY LEAST.

BUT U.S. SOLDIERS WOULDN'T BE SHOOTING AT CIVILIANS UNLESS...

...THEY WERE SURE NO ONE WAS GOING TO BE AROUND TO FILE A COMPLAINT LATER.



EVERYONE DOWN!

WHERE YOU GOING, MAN?!

SURVIVORS.

THOSE PEOPLE JUST TRIED TO KILL US!

DO I TELL ASTOR THEY WERE JUST DOING THEIR JOB?

THAT IN A CONTAGION SCENARIO LIKE THIS I MIGHT HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO KILL ON SIGHT AS WELL?

DEAD, BUT NO SCRATCHES.

HE DIED FROM THE FALL, NOT FROM ONE OF THEM.

BASE TO HAWKEYE, COME IN. BASE TO HAWKEYE.



NYPD OFFICER
JON GRIFFIN,
REQUESTING
IMMEDIATE
EVACUATION.

I'M HERE WITH
MY SON AND TWO
OTHERS. THEY NEED
TO BE TAKEN OUT OF
HERE AS QUICKLY
AS POSSIBLE.



... BUT
THAT'S NOT
GOING TO
HAPPEN.

THE ENTIRE
ISLAND OF
MANHATTAN IS
A RED ZONE.

I DON'T NEED
TO EXPLAIN THE
RULES TO YOU,
OFFICER.

THESE FLYOVER
MISSIONS ARE JUST
ABOUT TRYING TO KEEP
THEM CORRALLED ON
THE ISLAND-- TO KEEP
THIS SCOURGE FROM
SPREADING.



I CUT THE
TRANSMISSION.

NO POINT IN
ARGUING.

WE'RE ON OUR
OWN HERE.



WHAT
ARE THEY
DOING?

WILD.

JUST
A GUESS,
BUT...

...I THINK
THEY'RE
MAKING A
HIVE?

TO BE CONTINUED IN...
THE SCOURGE #4



The SCOURGE

#4

OF 6
COVER A



B2
A2
T1
EO



ALPHA

The SCOURGE

#4

OF 6
COVER B



BINGH



#4

OF 6
COVER C

The SCOURGE





#4

OF 6
COVER D

The SCOURGE



THE SCOURGE™

ISSUE 4 OF 6

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IT WASN'T THAT LONG AGO. THESE STREETS WERE FILLED WITH NEW YORKERS ON THEIR WAY HOME... TO THE BAR, MAYBE A DATE.

BUT THAT WAS BEFORE SOME SORT OF VIRUS STARTED TRANSFORMING INNOCENT PEOPLE INTO, I DON'T KNOW-- CREATURES?

I JUST LEARNED FROM AN ARMY COLONEL THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS ABOUT AN HOUR AWAY FROM "FINAL CONTAINMENT."

THAT'S MILITARY DOUBLESPEAK FOR "WE'RE GOING TO NUKE THE ISLAND OF MANHATTAN, KILLING EVERY LIVING THING, TO MAKE SURE THIS VIRUS DOESN'T SPREAD ANY FURTHER."

THERE WAS A TIME, WHEN I WAS IN THE ARMED SERVICES, I MIGHT HAVE HAD TO CARRY OUT THAT ORDER.

BUT I'M ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FIREWALL, WITH MY SON JON IN TOW.

WHICH MEANS...

HANG ON!

...I'LL DO ANYTHING
TO MAKE SURE THAT
DOESN'T HAPPEN!

EVEN IF IT MEANS
STOPPING THIS SCOURGE
WITH MY BARE HANDS.

ONLY ONE
OF US IS A
PROFESSIONAL
CAB DRIVER,
OFFICER...

...WHY AIN'T
I THE ONE
DRIVING THIS
CRATE?

WHAAM



YOU HAD
YOUR CHANCE,
ASTOR!
NOW STRAP
IN AND SHUT
THE HELL
UP!

THAT'S
ME, JOHN
GRIFFIN.

I WAS A COP
BACK WHEN
THE WORLD
MADE SENSE.



"CHANCE?!"
YOU'RE THE ONE
WHO TOLD ME TO
DRIVE MY CAB INTO
THE LOBBY OF
THAT BUILDING!

HIS NAME
IS ASTOR.

FIRST NAME?
LAST NAME?
I DON'T HAVE
A CLUE.

BUT HE HELPED
ME SAVE MY SON,
SO HE'S OKAY IN
MY BOOK.



ALI
CULLEN.

SHE WAS PROBABLY
EXCITED TO LEARN
SHE'D BE SUBSTITUTE
TEACHING TODAY.

MR. GRIFFIN,
I GET THAT SURFACE
STREETS AREN'T OUR
BEST OPTION,
BUT...

...PLEASE TELL
ME THIS IS PART OF
SOME REALLY ELABORATE
AND WELL THOUGHT OUT
PLAN YOU JUST HAVEN'T
SHARED WITH THE
REST OF US YET?



MY DAD KNOWS
WHAT HE'S DOING,
MISS CULLEN.

TRUST
ME.

THAT'S
MY BOY.

I DON'T HAVE
THE HEART TO
TELL HIM I'M
MAKING THIS UP
AS I GO ALONG.

THOSE THINGS WERE GATHERING AT THAT BUILDING DOWNTOWN-- WORKING TOGETHER-- DOING SOMETHING UP ON THE COMMUNICATIONS TOWER.

IT MEANS THEY HAVE A HIGHER PURPOSE. MAYBE A PLAN OF THEIR OWN?

THE WHOLE CITY IS A DANGEROUS PLACE RIGHT NOW.

AS DANGEROUS AS IT IS, I NEED TO TRY TO GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THEY'RE DOING.

IF I CAN FIND OUT WHAT THEY ARE UP TO--

--MAYBE STOP THEM--

--THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT ABORT THEIR DOOMSDAY SCENARIO.

CRASH

FOUR YEARS, THREE MONTHS AND TWENTY-TWO DAYS OF SOBRIETY...

...SO I WOULDN'T MISS THE END OF THE WORLD?

CLINK CLUNK

YOU OKAY BACK THERE, CHAMP?

WE'LL GET YOU HOME SAFE, JON.

PROMISE.

I'M NOT WORRIED.

YEAH, THAT'S A LOT OF 'MAYBES.'

BUT THE ALTERNATIVE JUST MEANS WAITING TO DIE.



IF I GET A VOTE, I
THINK WE SHOULD BE
HEADING FOR A BRIDGE
OR A TUNNEL-- TRY TO
GET OFF THIS ROCK!



NEW YORK IS
LOCKED DOWN!
THEY AREN'T GOING
TO LET US OFF WHILE
THE VIRUS IS RAGING--
NO MATTER HOW
POLITELY WE
ASK!

LIKE IT OR
NOT-- AND I
DON'T-- WE HAVE
TO FIND A WAY TO
STOP THESE
THINGS.



MORE LIKE
THEY'RE ACTING LIKE
THEY'RE HUNGRY--
AND WE'RE THE
DINNER!

MAYBE WE
SHOULDN'T BE
SO EAGER TO RUSH
TO THE PLATE
AND--

IT'S ALMOST
AS IF THEY ARE
ACTING WITH...
A PURPOSE?



EH?!
WHAT?!

BOONK



OH
NO YOU
DIDN'T!

SORRY.

MAYBE YOU
SHOULD SIT DOWN
AND LET DAD THINK
THIS OUT?

KLUICK
KLUICK



YOU'RE SAYING
IT ISN'T ABOUT
AN APPETITE FOR
HUMAN FLESH?

WE'RE NOT
JUST A MEAL
TICKET?

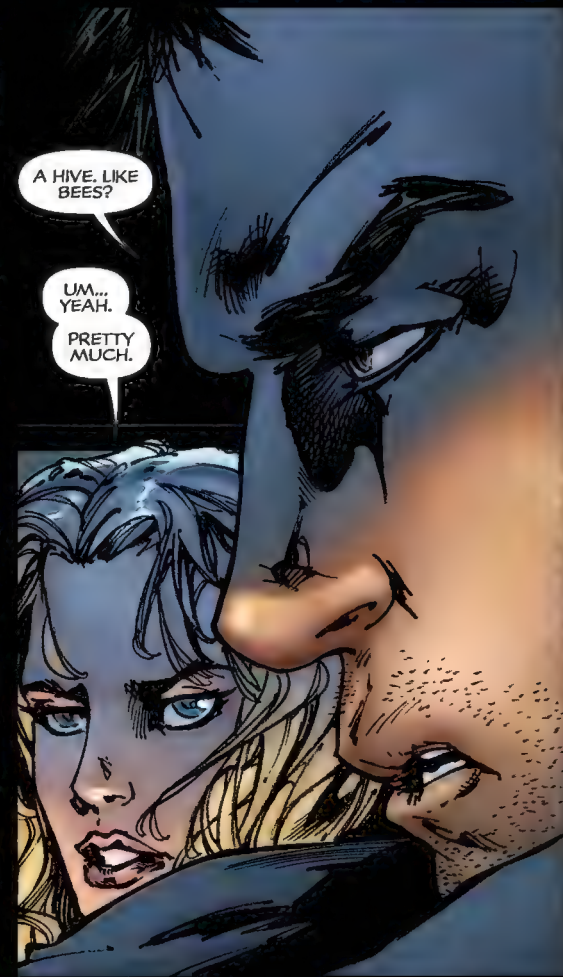
IF IT IS A
VIRUS, LIKE YOU
SAY, IT NEEDS A
HOST BODY TO
TRAVEL.



THE WAY THEY
METHODICALLY
CREATE MORE
AND MORE OF
THEMSELVES?

ATTACKING THAT
COMMUNICATIONS
TOWER?

IT'S SORT OF LIKE
THEY'RE PROTECTING
THE HIVE-- IF THAT
MAKES SENSE.



A HIVE, LIKE
BEES?

UM...
YEAH.

PRETTY
MUCH.



THUMP THUMP TH-BUMP

IS THAT--?

PROBABLY, YEAH.

D-DAD?!

EVERYONE HOLD ONTO SOMETHING-- I'M GOING TO TRY TO SHAKE THEM OFF!



DAMMIT!

CAN'T
USE... MY
GUN...

CAN'T... SEE
A THING!

WHAM

SCREW
THIS!

UKKK!

ALL—
TAKE THE
WHEEL!

GOT IT!

NOW
WHAT?!

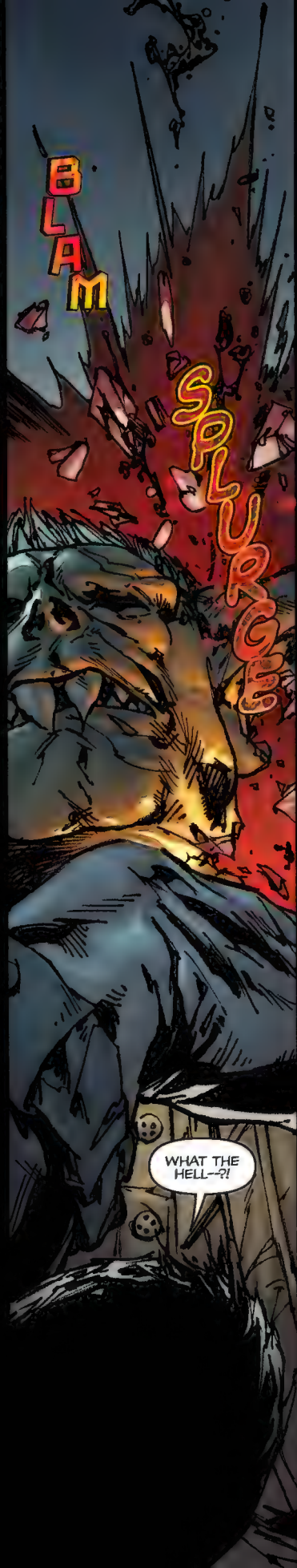
I'M...
THINKING!



YOU DID GOOD, KID! NOW HOLD IT LONG ENOUGH--

--FOR ME TO KICK IT'S BRAINS IN!

THAT WON'T WORK! DAD SAID YOU NEED TO CUT THE JUG'LER!



WHAT THE HELL--?!



DO YOU
EVER GET
USED TO
THAT?

NEVER.



JON?!

I DON'T KNOW
WHAT HAPPENED BACK
THERE-- BUT THIS ONE
LOOKS DEAD AS
CAN BE.

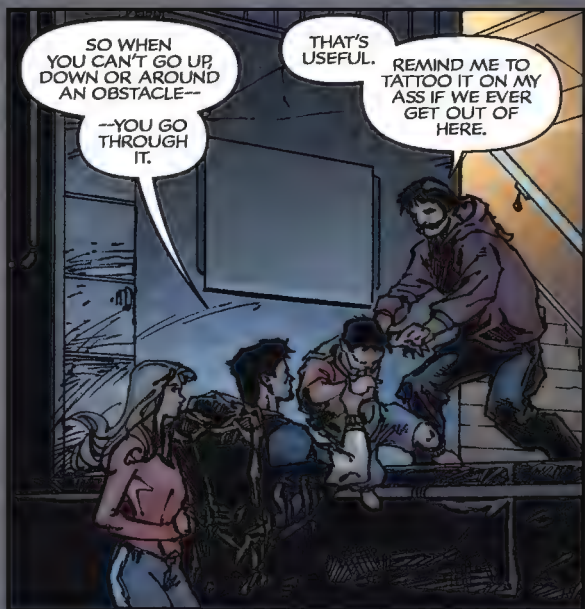


SCRUNCH

SCRUNCH









THIS SHOULD BE ABOUT WHERE THOSE THINGS WERE-- THE ONES THAT WERE SWARMING THAT TOWER.

WHERE ARE THEY, DAD? SHOULDN'T THEY BE AROUND HERE?



THEY'RE UP THERE. YOU CAN HEAR THEM DOING SOMETHING.

WE JUST CAN'T SEE THEM FROM THIS ANGLE BECAUSE WE'RE DIRECTLY UNDERNEATH.

THAT MAKES SENSE. B-BUT...

...WHO ARE THOSE PEOPLE?



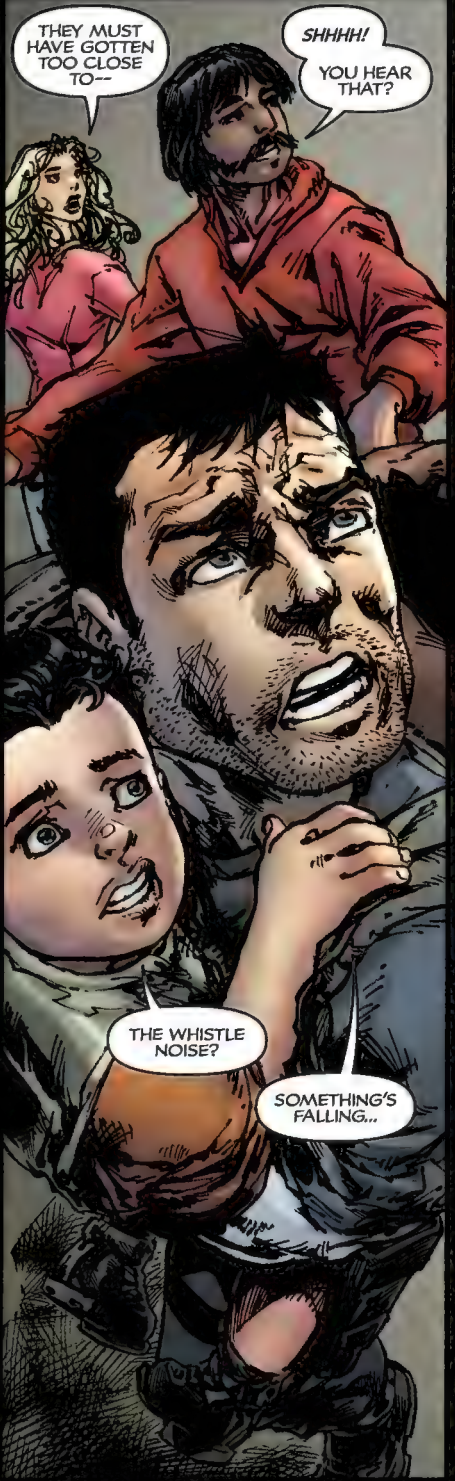
NOTICE ANYTHING STRANGE ABOUT THESE PEOPLE?

OTHER THAN THEY'RE ALL DEAD?

THEIR CLOTHES-- SHREDDED.

IT MEANS... THEY WERE THOSE THINGS... BUT THEY CHANGED BACK BEFORE THEY...

...FELL?



THEY MUST HAVE GOTTEN TOO CLOSE TO--

SHHHH! YOU HEAR THAT?

THE WHISTLE NOISE?

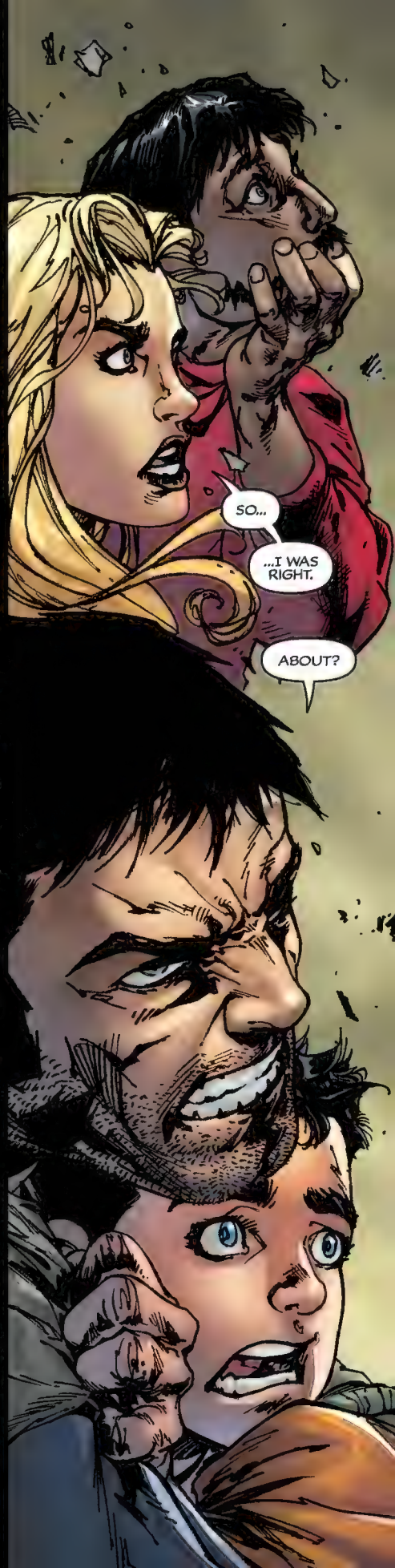
SOMETHING'S FALLING...



WE LEAP
CLEAR...

...LUCKIER THAN
WE HAVE ANY
RIGHT TO BE!

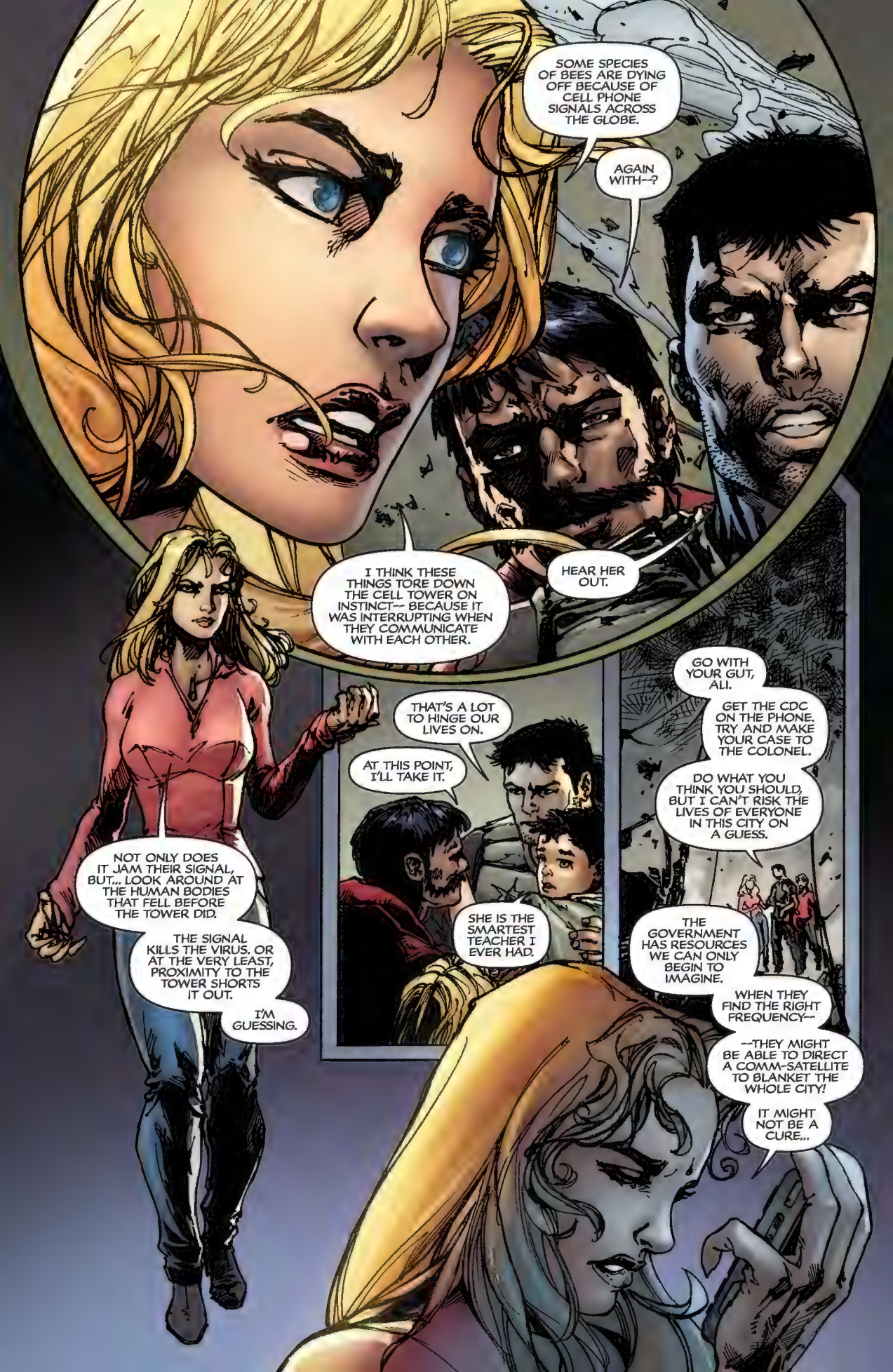
KRAKADOO



SO...

...I WAS
RIGHT.

ABOUT?



SOME SPECIES OF BEES ARE DYING OFF BECAUSE OF CELL PHONE SIGNALS ACROSS THE GLOBE.

AGAIN WITH--?

I THINK THESE THINGS TORE DOWN THE CELL TOWER ON INSTINCT-- BECAUSE IT WAS INTERRUPTING WHEN THEY COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER.

HEAR HER OUT.

GO WITH YOUR GUT, ALI.

GET THE CDC ON THE PHONE. TRY AND MAKE YOUR CASE TO THE COLONEL.

DO WHAT YOU THINK YOU SHOULD, BUT I CAN'T RISK THE LIVES OF EVERYONE IN THIS CITY ON A GUESS.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS RESOURCES WE CAN ONLY BEGIN TO IMAGINE.

WHEN THEY FIND THE RIGHT FREQUENCY--

--THEY MIGHT BE ABLE TO DIRECT A COMM-SATELLITE TO BLANKET THE WHOLE CITY!

IT MIGHT NOT BE A CURE...

THAT'S A LOT TO HINGE OUR LIVES ON.

AT THIS POINT, I'LL TAKE IT.

SHE IS THE SMARTEST TEACHER I EVER HAD.

NOT ONLY DOES IT JAM THEIR SIGNAL, BUT... LOOK AROUND AT THE HUMAN BODIES THAT FELL BEFORE THE TOWER DID.

THE SIGNAL KILLS THE VIRUS. OR AT THE VERY LEAST, PROXIMITY TO THE TOWER SHORTS IT OUT.

I'M GUESSING.

...BUT IT
WILL DO UNTIL
ONE COMES
ALONG!

DAMMIT...

...NO
SIGNAL.

NO.

REALLY?

YOU
THINK?

DAD?
WHAT ARE
YOU GOING
TO DO?

IF SHE'S
EVEN A LITTLE
RIGHT ABOUT
THEM ACTING
WITH A HIVE
MENTALITY,
IT STANDS TO
REASON THEY'D
PROTECT THEIR
"QUEEN BEE."
THE ONE WHO
STARTED ALL
OF THIS.

DO YOU
EVEN KNOW
WHO THAT
IS, DAD?

YES.

THERE ARE A
LOT OF THOSE
THINGS.

WELL,
IF THEY ARE
ALL GATHERING
TO PROTECT
HER...

...I THINK I
KNOW WHERE
THEY MIGHT
BE.

IT'S NOT A
"HER"... IT IS
A "HIM."

DR. PETER
NEWBURGH. JON'S
"UNCLE PETE."

JON IS ALREADY SCARED
TO DEATH. I DON'T NEED
TO BREAK HIS HEART TOO.



THERE'S NO REASON HE
HAS TO KNOW THAT...

...IF I'M GOING
TO STOP THIS, I
HAVE TO WADE
THROUGH HELL...

...AND KILL MY
BEST FRIEND.

TO BE CONTINUED IN...
THE SCOURGE #5



The SCOURGE

#5
OF 6
COVER A





The SCOURGE

#5

OF 6

COVER B



The SCOURGE™

Issue 5 of 6

"SCORCHED"

STORY
SCOTT LOBDELL

ILLUSTRATIONS
ERIC BATTLE

COLORS
DAVID CURIEL

LETTERS
JOSH REED

Amidst a catastrophic outbreak blanketing the island of Manhattan, which has turned its citizens into flesh-eating creatures, NYPD Swat Officer John Griffin learns firsthand that serving the people—and protecting the people—are two entirely different concepts. As the U.S. Military counts down to a sixty-minute zero hour when the world's greatest metropolis will be completely decimated in order to prevent further spread of the virus, Griffin and his son Jon, along with his schoolteacher Ali and a cabbie named Astor, must attempt to somehow end the rapidly-growing scourge all by themselves. However, Griffin soon becomes aware of an even more stark reality—that he must find and kill the hive's controlling "queen bee", a vicious monstrosity he once knew as his best friend...

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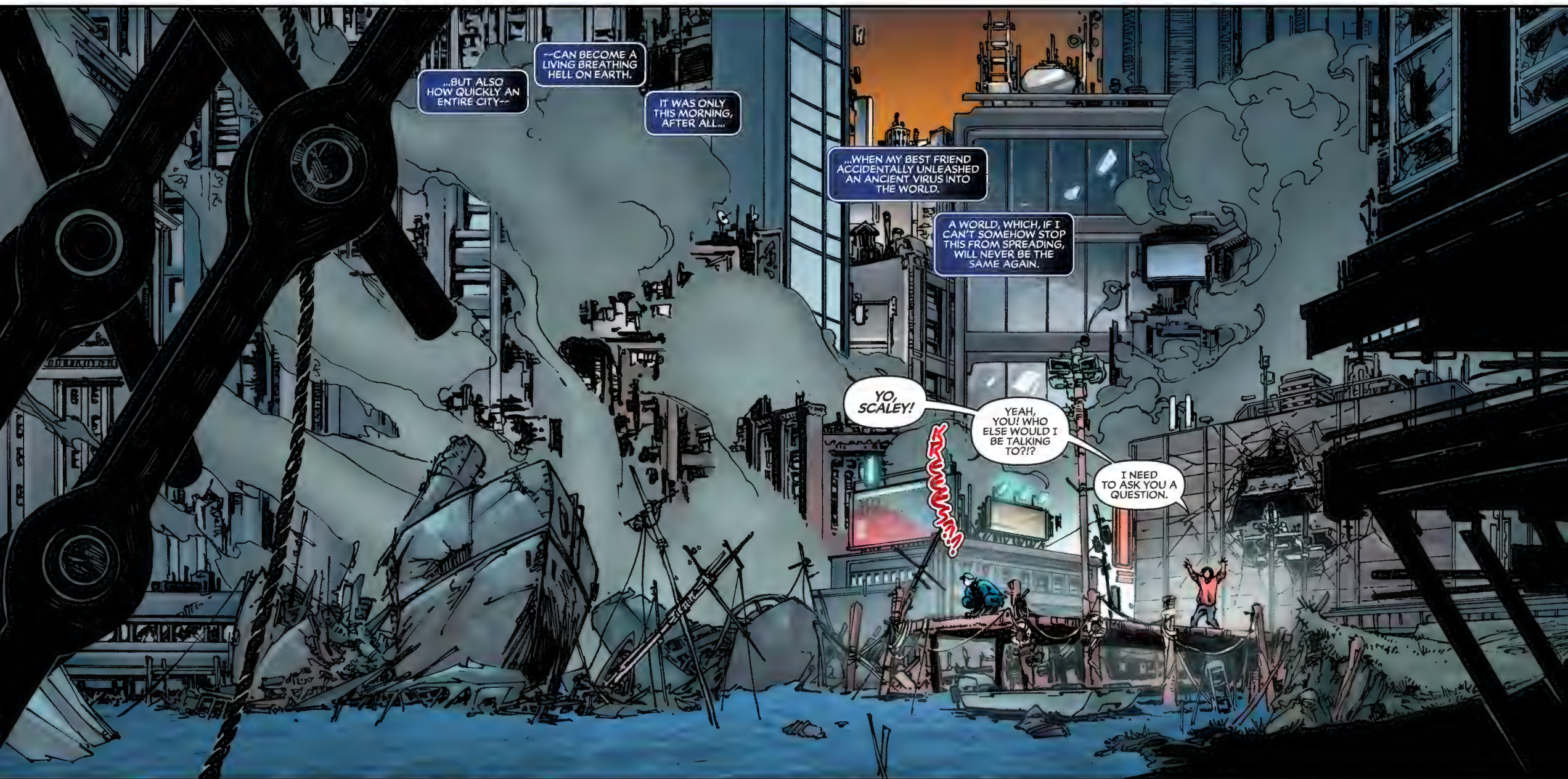
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I NEVER GAVE IT
MUCH THOUGHT
BEFORE TODAY.

BUT THIS IS WHAT
I WOULD PROBABLY
IMAGINE HELL TO
BE LIKE.

NOT JUST THE HORROR OF
SEEING ANOTHER PERSON-- AN
OTHERWISE TOTALLY INNOCENT
HUMAN BEING-- TRANSFORMED
INTO A SNARLING, RAGING
MONSTER...



...BUT ALSO
HOW QUICKLY AN
ENTIRE CITY--

--CAN BECOME A
LIVING BREATHING
HELL ON EARTH.

IT WAS ONLY
THIS MORNING,
AFTER ALL...

...WHEN MY BEST FRIEND
ACCIDENTALLY UNLEASHED
AN ANCIENT VIRUS INTO
THE WORLD.

A WORLD, WHICH, IF I
CAN'T SOMEHOW STOP
THIS FROM SPREADING,
WILL NEVER BE THE
SAME AGAIN.

YO,
SCALEY!

YEAH,
YOU! WHO
ELSE WOULD I
BE TALKING
TO??

I NEED
TO ASK YOU A
QUESTION.

Awwww!



WERE YOU
THIS UGLY WHEN
YOU WERE STILL
A PERSON?

BECAUSE A FACE
AS HOMELY AS YOURS
OUGHTTA' BE HANGING
IN A MUSEUM.

HIS NAME
IS ASTOR.

A CAB DRIVER.
MAYBE THAT'S WHERE
HE COMES BY HIS
BALLS OF STEEL.



HE VOLUNTEERED
TO DISTRACT THE
CREATURE.

SERIOUSLY,
YOU SHOULD
BE IN THE FUGLY
HALL OF FAME,
DUDE.

OR IS
IT DUDE-
ETTE?



GRRRRRR!

FUNNY, EVEN
WITH THE WORLD
ENDING...

...YOU CAN'T
QUESTION A DUDE'S
SEXUALITY OR THEY
GET ALL KINDS
OF ANGRY.

MAN, IT'S
THE GODDAMNED
APOCALYPSE. WE
SHOULD BE BETTER
THAN THIS.

BRAVE
GUY.

LOVES TO
RAMBLE.

HE DID WHAT HE
HAD TO DO.

RISKED HIS LIFE
SO I COULD BE IN A
POSITION TO DO--

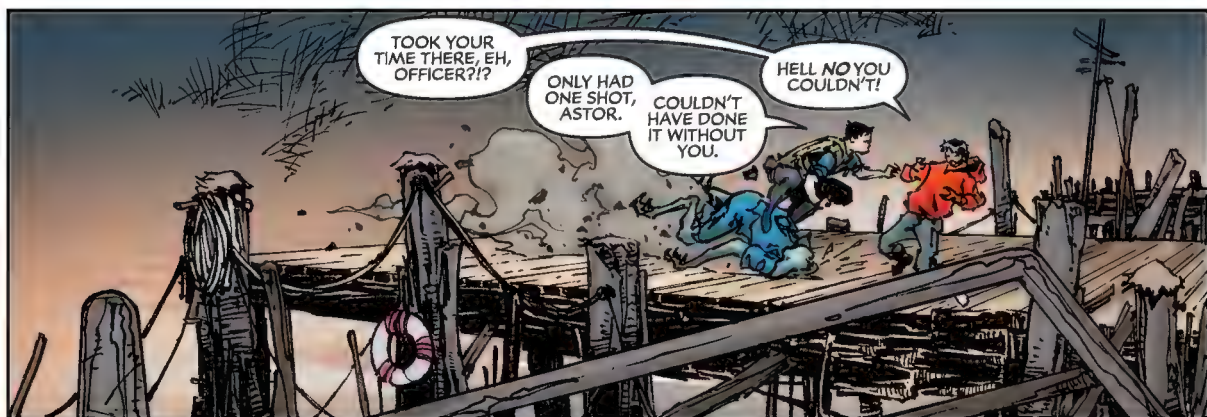
--THIS!

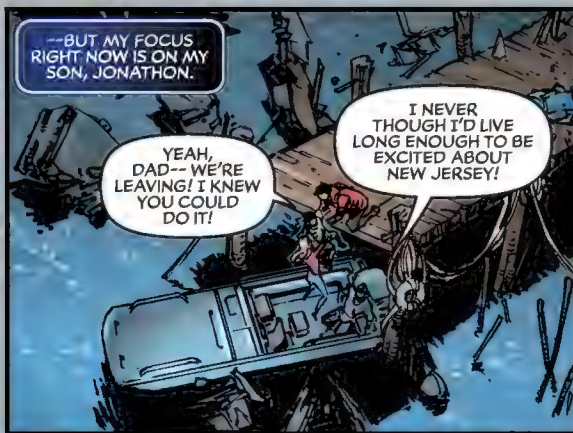
ONE SLICE ALONG
THE JUGULAR VEIN
AND IT'S DEAD WITHIN
SECONDS.

SHISSSSSHKT

AAAAAGH!







--BUT MY FOCUS
RIGHT NOW IS ON MY
SON, JONATHAN.

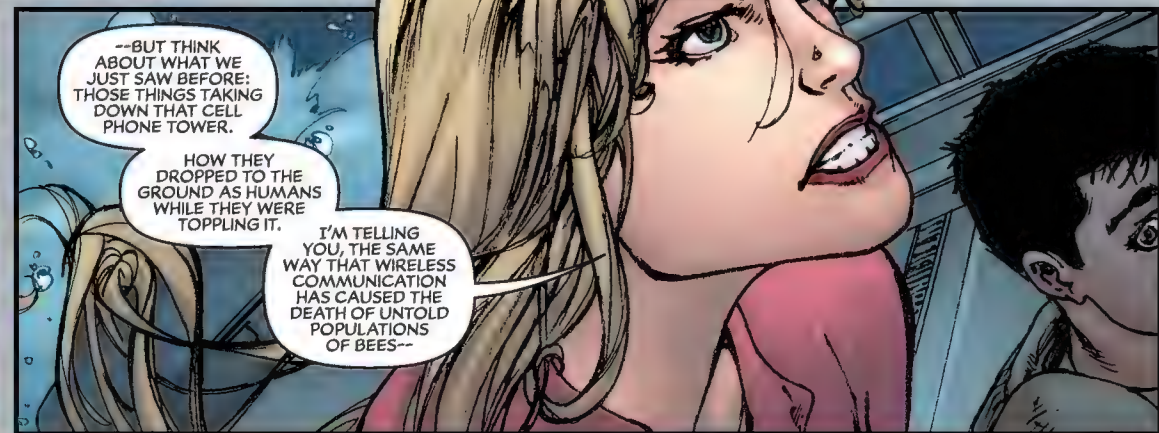
YEAH,
DAD-- WE'RE
LEAVING! I KNEW
YOU COULD
DO IT!

I NEVER
THOUGH I'D LIVE
LONG ENOUGH TO BE
EXCITED ABOUT
NEW JERSEY!



LET'S JUST
SAY... WE'RE GETTING
OFF THE ISLAND
AND LEAVE IT
AT THAT.

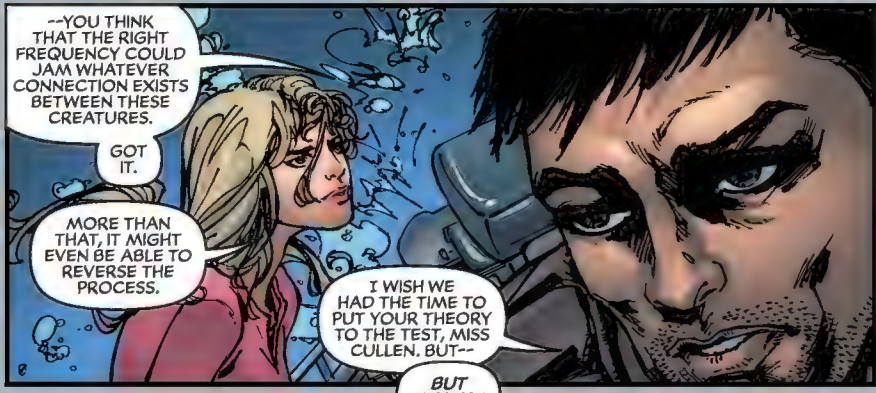
I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
YOUR PLAN IS,
GRIFFIN--



--BUT THINK
ABOUT WHAT WE
JUST SAW BEFORE:
THOSE THINGS TAKING
DOWN THAT CELL
PHONE TOWER.

HOW THEY
DROPPED TO THE
GROUND AS HUMANS
WHILE THEY WERE
TOPPLING IT.

I'M TELLING
YOU, THE SAME
WAY THAT WIRELESS
COMMUNICATION
HAS CAUSED THE
DEATH OF UNTOLD
POPULATIONS
OF BEES--



--YOU THINK
THAT THE RIGHT
FREQUENCY COULD
JAM WHATEVER
CONNECTION EXISTS
BETWEEN THESE
CREATURES.

GOT
IT.

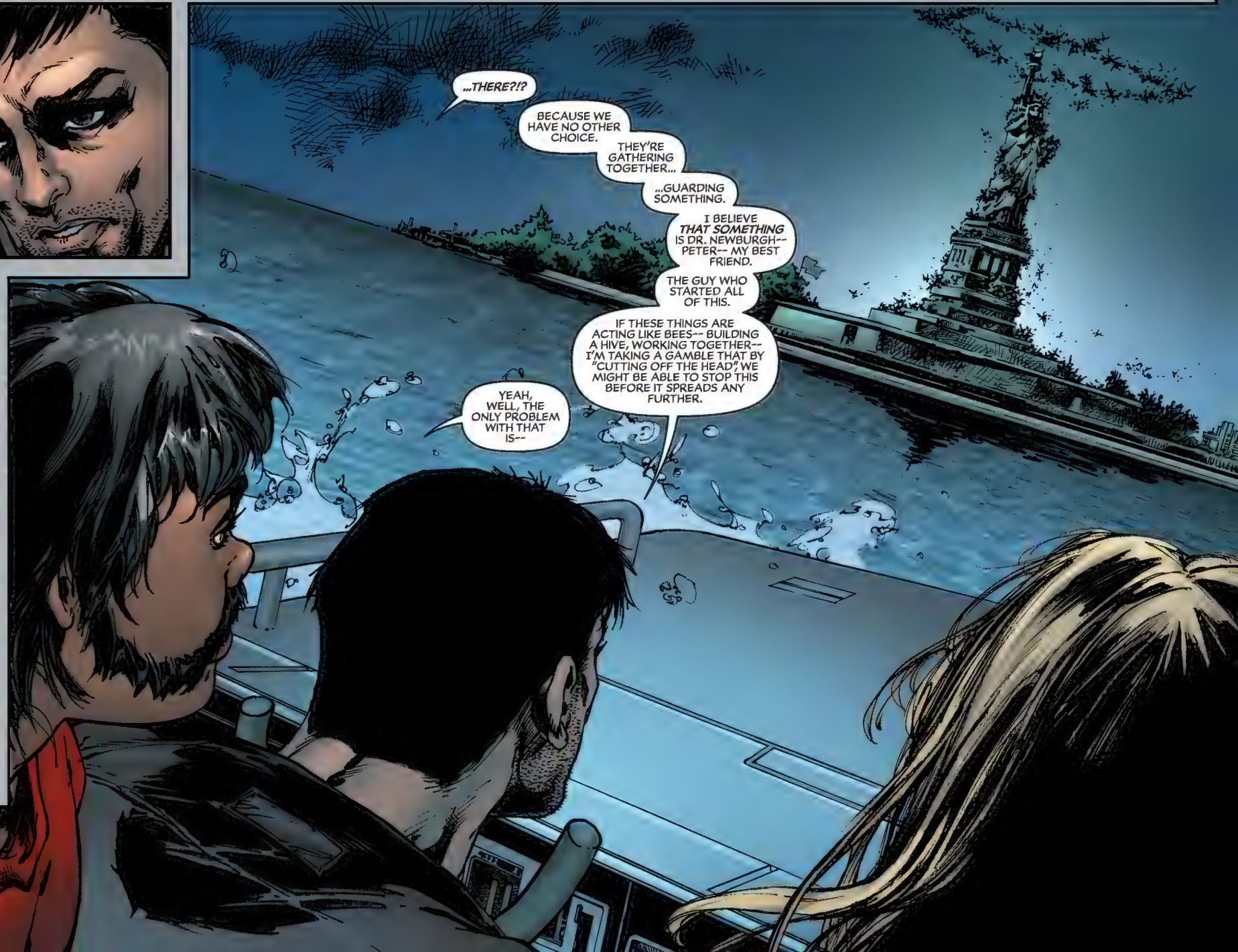
MORE THAN
THAT, IT MIGHT
EVEN BE ABLE TO
REVERSE THE
PROCESS.

I WISH WE
HAD THE TIME TO
PUT YOUR THEORY
TO THE TEST, MISS
CULLEN, BUT--

BUT
EXCUSE
ME!



I THOUGHT
WE WERE GETTING
OUT OF HERE-- OUT
OF DANGER! SO
WHY ARE WE
HEADING...



...THERE?!

BECAUSE WE
HAVE NO OTHER
CHOICE.

THEY'RE
GATHERING
TOGETHER...

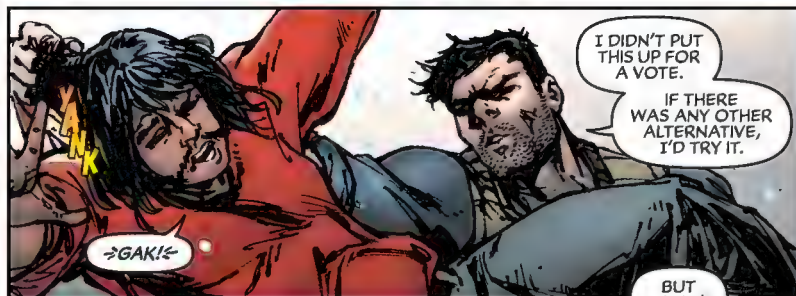
...GUARDING
SOMETHING.

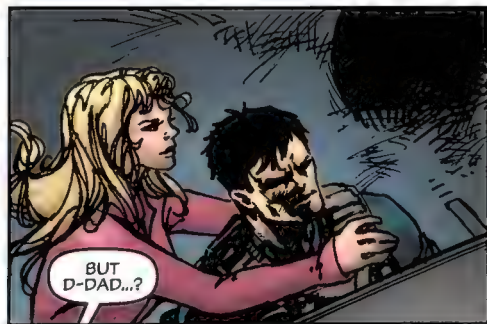
I BELIEVE
THAT SOMETHING
IS DR. NEWBURGH--
PETER-- MY BEST
FRIEND.

THE GUY WHO
STARTED ALL
OF THIS.

IF THESE THINGS ARE
ACTING LIKE BEES-- BUILDING
A HIVE, WORKING TOGETHER--
I'M TAKING A GAMBLE THAT BY
"CUTTING OFF THE HEAD" WE
MIGHT BE ABLE TO STOP THIS
BEFORE IT SPREADS ANY
FURTHER.

YEAH,
WELL, THE
ONLY PROBLEM
WITH THAT
IS--





BUT
D-DAD...?



WHY YOU,
DAD?
YOU TALKED
TO THAT COLONEL
GUY BEFORE. AREN'T
THEY GOING
TO HELP?

AREN'T
THEY GOING
TO SAVE
US?



NO, JON.
THEY'RE
NOT.



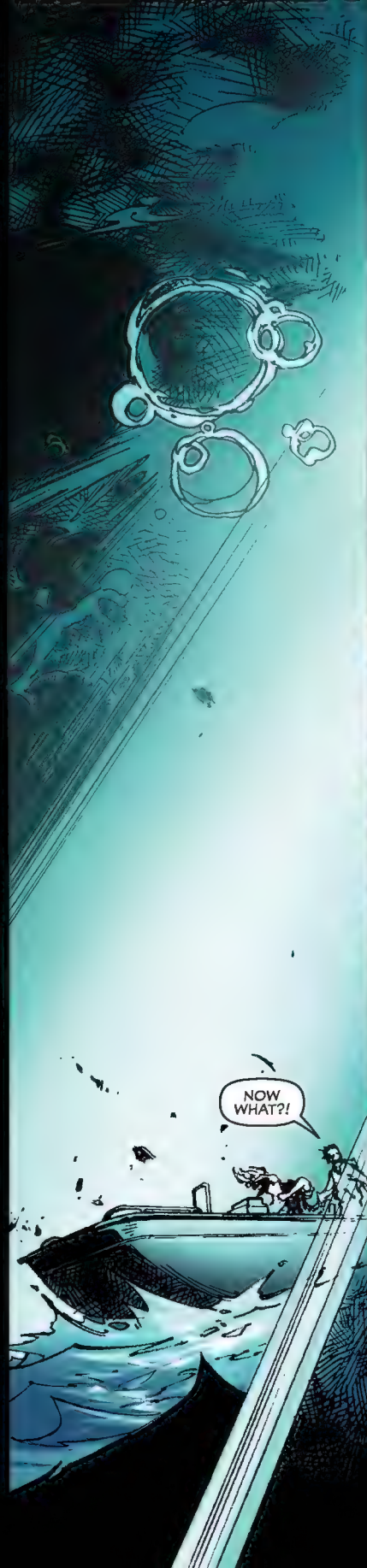
THE TRUTH
IS, WE'RE ON
OUR OWN.

THE MOMENT
PETER CHANGED,
HE STOPPED BEING
MY FRIEND.

HE
STOPPED
BEING
HUMAN.

WE'RE NOT
GOING TO STAND
AROUND AND WATCH
THIS PLAGUE SPREAD
TO THE REST OF
THE WORLD.

THUPPATHUPPATHUPPATHUPPATHUPPA

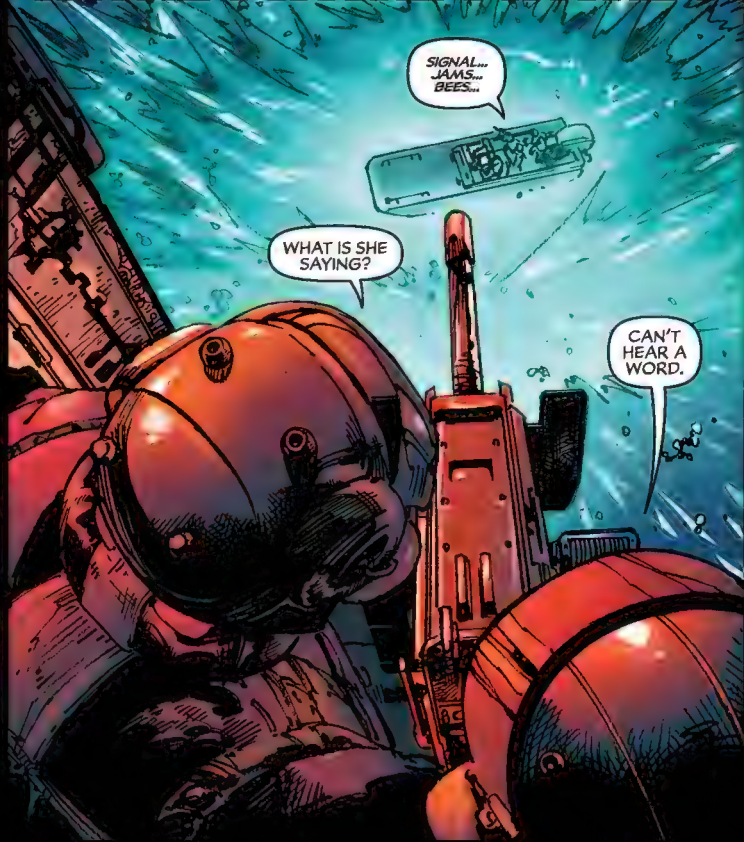


THEIR
WEAPONS
ARE LOADED
AND LOCKED
ON US.

I CAN SEE
THE CHAMBERS
FROM HERE.

THE PULL OF
A TRIGGER AND
IT'S OVER. FOR
US, ANYWAY.

PATHUPPATHUPPATHUPPATHUPPA



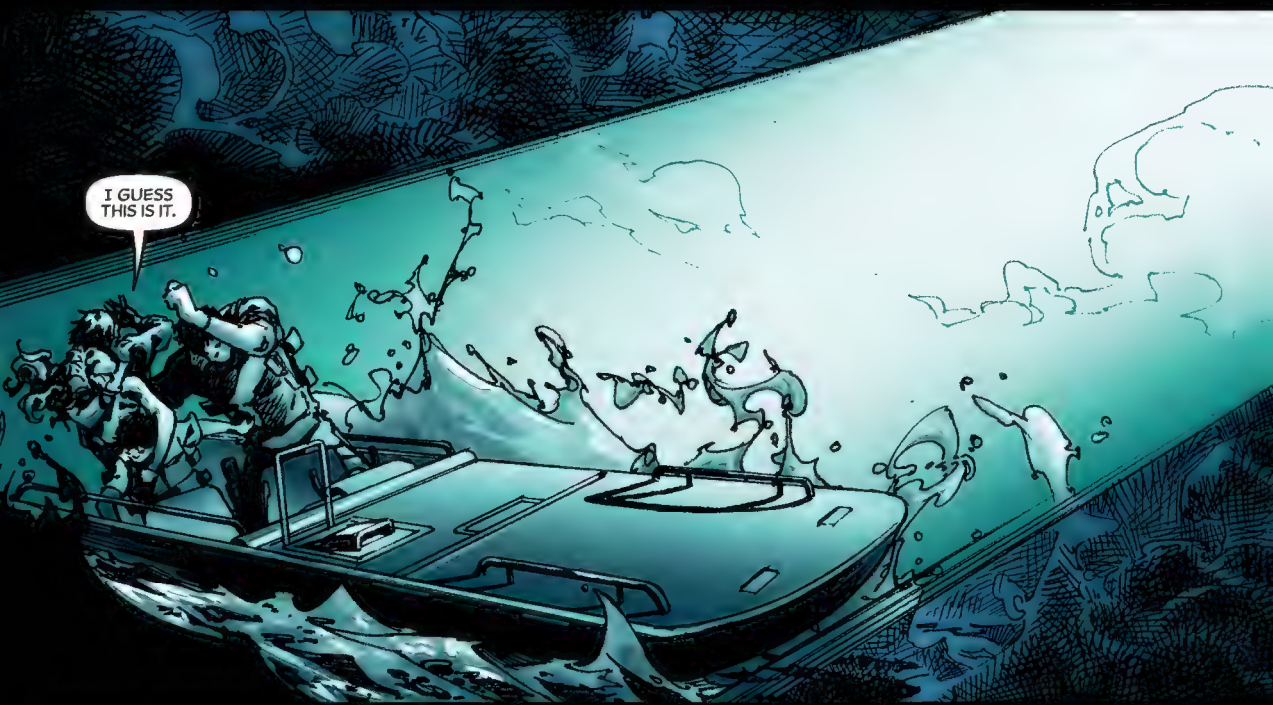
SIGNAL...
JAMS...
BEES...

WHAT IS SHE
SAYING?

CAN'T
HEAR A
WORD.

NOW
WHAT?!





I GUESS
THIS IS IT.

THUPPAT HUPPAT HUPPAT HUPPAT HUPPAT HUPPAT



THEY'RE
LEAVING!

⇒PHEW!←



NO,
THEY'RE
LEAVING.

THE
COLONEL I
SPOKE TO
EARLIER.

HE'S
TRUSTING
THAT I HAVE
A PLAN.

HERE'S HOPING
I DON'T LET
HIM DOWN.

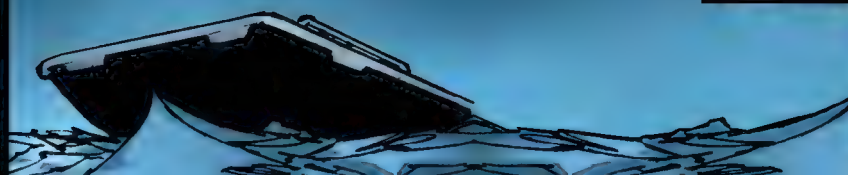


THUPPATHUPPATHU



PPATHUPPATHUPPA

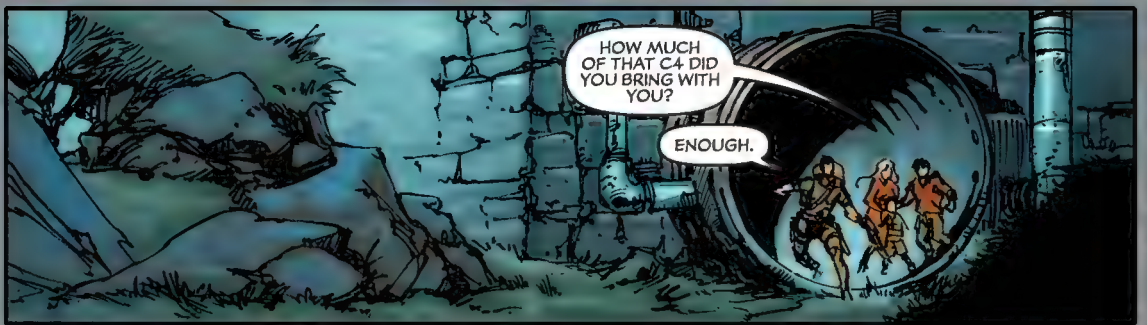






HOW MUCH
OF THAT C4 DID
YOU BRING WITH
YOU?

ENOUGH.







SIR, THE WOMAN JUST PHONED NINE-ONE-ONE.

PATCH ME INTO THAT CALL.

MA'AM, THIS IS NINE-ONE-ONE.

WE HAVE NO JURISDICTION OVER BEES.

I SAID "LIKE BEES!" LISTEN, YOU NEED TO--

ROUTE IT HERE, NOW!



MISS, THIS IS COLONEL BLUNT. I WAS SPEAKING TO OFFICER GRIFFIN EARLIER. WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

OH-- UM, COLONEL! I THINK IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE-- MAYBE EVEN PROBABLE--

--THAT IF YOU FIND THE RIGHT FREQUENCY...

...YOU CAN JAM THE PART OF THE BRAIN THAT ALLOWS THEM TO COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER. AND, WITH A LITTLE LUCK--



I'M ON IT!

PEOPLE, FIND ME THAT FREQUENCY!

AND GET ME A LINK TO EVERY COM-SATELLITE AND COMMUNICATIONS AIRSHIP IN THE TRI-STATE AREA!

FIVE MINUTES AGO!

YES, SIR!





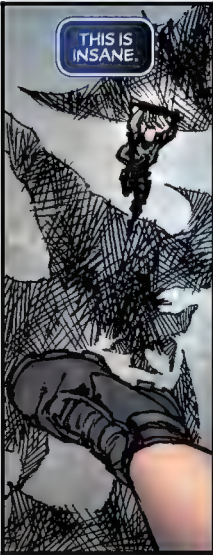
DAAAAD!?!

HRRADUCK

JONATHON!

IT'S LIKE WATCHING
SOMEONE RIP MY
HEART OUT.

I CAN ONLY PRAY
THE KEVLAR VEST WILL
KEEP HIM ALIVE LONG
ENOUGH THAT
I CAN...



THIS IS
INSANE.



I KNOW IT.

BUT IT IS THE
ONLY WAY I CAN
REACH HIM!

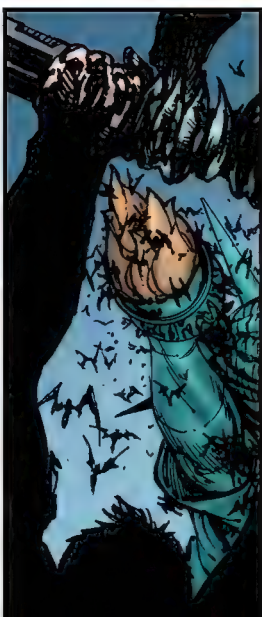


I CAN'T FLY... SO
I'LL LET THIS ONE
DO THE FLYING
FOR ME.



THAT THING
BROUGHT HIM
TO THE TOP OF
THE TORCH.

SO THAT IS WHERE
I'M GOING...!



YEAH.



INSANE.

CLOSE
ENOUGH...

BOOM

...THIS IS WHERE
I GET OFF.

BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM

IF I WAS
ANYONE ELSE,
I MIGHT FIRE
OFF A QUIP.

A "THANKS FOR
THE RIDE."

BUT I'M NOT
THAT GUY.

I'M A
DAD...



WHO WILL
DO ANYTHING
TO PROTECT
HIS KID.

EVEN IF IT MEANS
LYING THROUGH
MY TEETH.

RRRRARRRR

SORRY!

S'OKAY,
JON.

S'OKAY.
HANG
ON!

RAAWL

KREESSKK

TO BE CONCLUDED IN...
THE SCOURGE #6



#6

OF 6
COVER A

The SCOURGE



21011
BATTLE



The SCOURGE

#6

OF 6
COVER B



The SCOURGE™

Issue 6 of 6

STORY
SCOTT LOBDELL

ILLUSTRATIONS
ERIC BATTLE

COLORS
DAVID CURIEL

LETTERS
JOSH REED

NYPD Swat Officer John Griffin, along with his son Jonathon, Ali and Astor, are faced with impossible odds for survival amongst a growing apocalypse of creatures bearing down upon his city. Armed with enough C4 to completely decimate New York City's beacon of freedom and hope—The Statue of Liberty—John must make the devastating choice to abandon his past bond by finding and killing his best friend, Dr. Peter Newburgh, on Ellis Island. And, if Griffin fails at the task at hand, the island of Manhattan—as well as the rest of the world—will face certain annihilation...

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I'LL BE HONEST.

BECAUSE I'VE BEEN TRAINED THAT THE ONLY WAY OUT OF A NO-WIN SCENARIO IS TO MAKE AN HONEST ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION.

AND HONESTLY? I CAN'T FIGURE OUT ANY WAY IN HELL WE GET OUT OF THIS.

Kreeeess

B-BOOM

BLAM

DAD?!

BLAM

DOESN'T MEAN I'M GOING TO STOP TRYING.

DOESN'T MEAN I'M NOT GOING TO FIGHT UNTIL THE END.

BUT SHORT OF THE HEAVENS OPENING UP AND GOD HIMSELF HURLING LIGHTNING BOLTS FROM THE CLOUDS...

SKRETT

THIS IS IT.



BUD DABUDDA BUDDA

KRUNKT

SO THEY AREN'T
LIGHTNING BOLTS.

BUT THEY DO
THE TRICK.

DAD,
WHA--?!



I DON'T KNOW IF
THESE GUYS WERE
AUTHORIZED TO
INTERVENE---

--OR THEY JUST
COULDN'T TURN THEIR
BACKS ON A FATHER
AND SON.

AT THIS MOMENT,
IT DOESN'T MUCH
MATTER!



THEY GAVE US
THE INSTANT WE
NEED TO GET
AWAY...

...AND WE'RE
TAKING IT!

KRASHK



THEY'RE
LEAVING!

THEY CAN'T
AFFORD TO STAY
ANY LONGER.

REMEMBER
HOW THOSE THINGS
TOOK DOWN THAT
COPTER IN THE
CITY?



NOW, NO MORE
WORDS UNTIL WE'RE
OUT OF HERE.



WITH
ANY LUCK
AT ALL...

... I CAN
FIND THE GUY
THAT STARTED
THIS AND END
IT ALL.



THE GOOD NEWS IS... IT LOOKS LIKE THE COP AND THE KID GOT AWAY.

THE BAD NEWS IS STILL THE BAD NEWS IT WAS A MINUTE AGO: THIS PLACE IS CRAWLING WITH THOSE THINGS.

AND I DON'T CARE HOW BAD YOU NEED A SIGNAL— GET BACK IN HERE!



NO, I CAN'T SAY FOR SURE IT WILL WORK.

NO ONE CAN, COLONEL.

BUT IT ALL MAKES SENSE.



WE SAW THE HUMANS WHO FELL FROM THE CELL PHONE TOWER-- THE ONE THE GARGOYLES PULLED TO THE GROUND.

WHY WOULD THEY HAVE DONE THAT IF THEY DIDN'T RECOGNIZE THE SIGNAL AS SORT OF A NATURAL ENEMY?

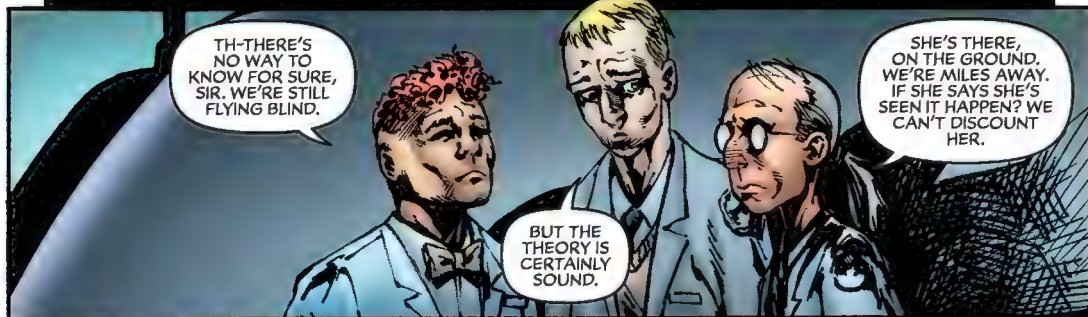
SOMETHING THAT JAMMED NOT ONLY THEIR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE--

--BUT THE TRANSFORMATIONS AS WELL?

DON'T YOU SEE, SIR? IF WE CAN FIND THAT FREQUENCY FROM THE TOWER AND PROJECT IT OVER THE CITY AND THE STATUE OF LIBERTY...?

GENTLEMAN, YOU'RE THE EGGHEADS...

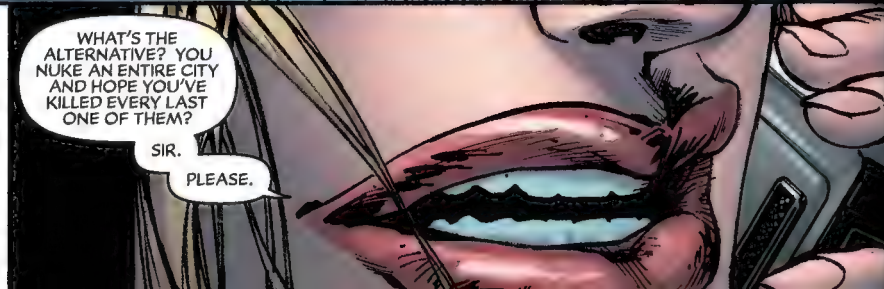
... WHAT DO YOU SAY?



TH-THERE'S NO WAY TO KNOW FOR SURE, SIR. WE'RE STILL FLYING BLIND.

BUT THE THEORY IS CERTAINLY SOUND.

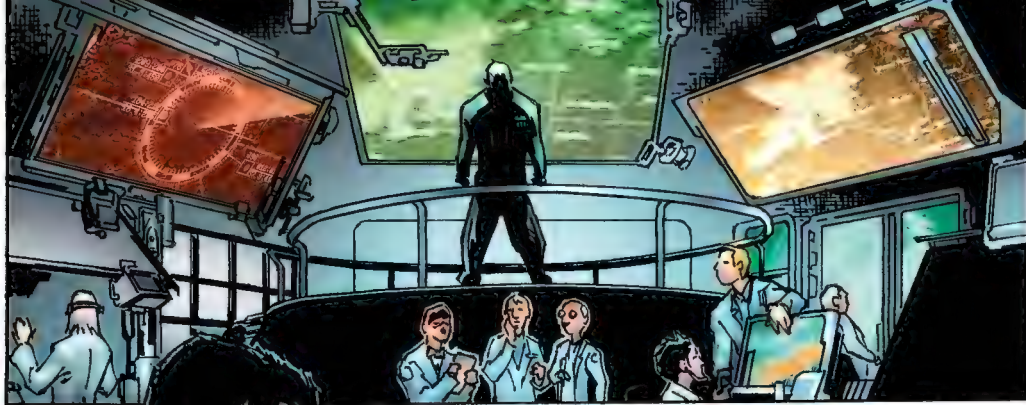
SHE'S THERE, ON THE GROUND. WE'RE MILES AWAY. IF SHE SAYS SHE'S SEEN IT HAPPEN? WE CAN'T DISCOUNT HER.



WHAT'S THE ALTERNATIVE? YOU NUKE AN ENTIRE CITY AND HOPE YOU'VE KILLED EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM?

SIR.

PLEASE.





WE MADE IT!

THIS FAR, YES-- BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD TO GET COCKY.



STAY CLOSE. IF WE CAN BLOW THIS WHOLE BUILDING...

...WE CAN MAKE SURE THIS VIRUS DOESN'T SPREAD!

LET'S DO THIS, DAD!



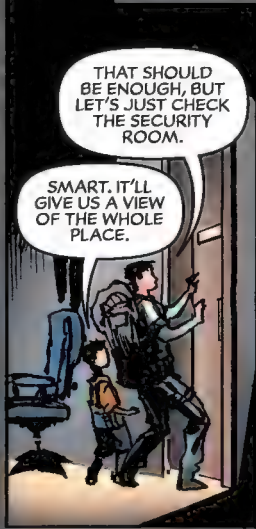
I KNOW WE HAVEN'T SPENT A LOT OF TIME TOGETHER SINCE THE DIVORCE--

--BUT IT'S NICE TO KNOW THE APPLE HASN'T ROLLED VERY FAR FROM THE TREE.

KIND OF MAKES ME WONDER...

AM I SAVING HIM...?

OR IS HE SAVING ME?



THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH, BUT LET'S JUST CHECK THE SECURITY ROOM.

SMART. IT'LL GIVE US A VIEW OF THE WHOLE PLACE.

SPOKEN LIKE A BORN TACTICIAN.

MAKE SURE WE HAVEN'T...

...MISSED...



D-DAD?

THOSE THINGS ARE
SMARTER THAN WE GAVE
THEM CREDIT FOR.

WE THOUGHT THEY
GATHERED TOGETHER TO
PROTECT THEIR "QUEEN
BEE"-- THE FIRST
GARGOYLE.

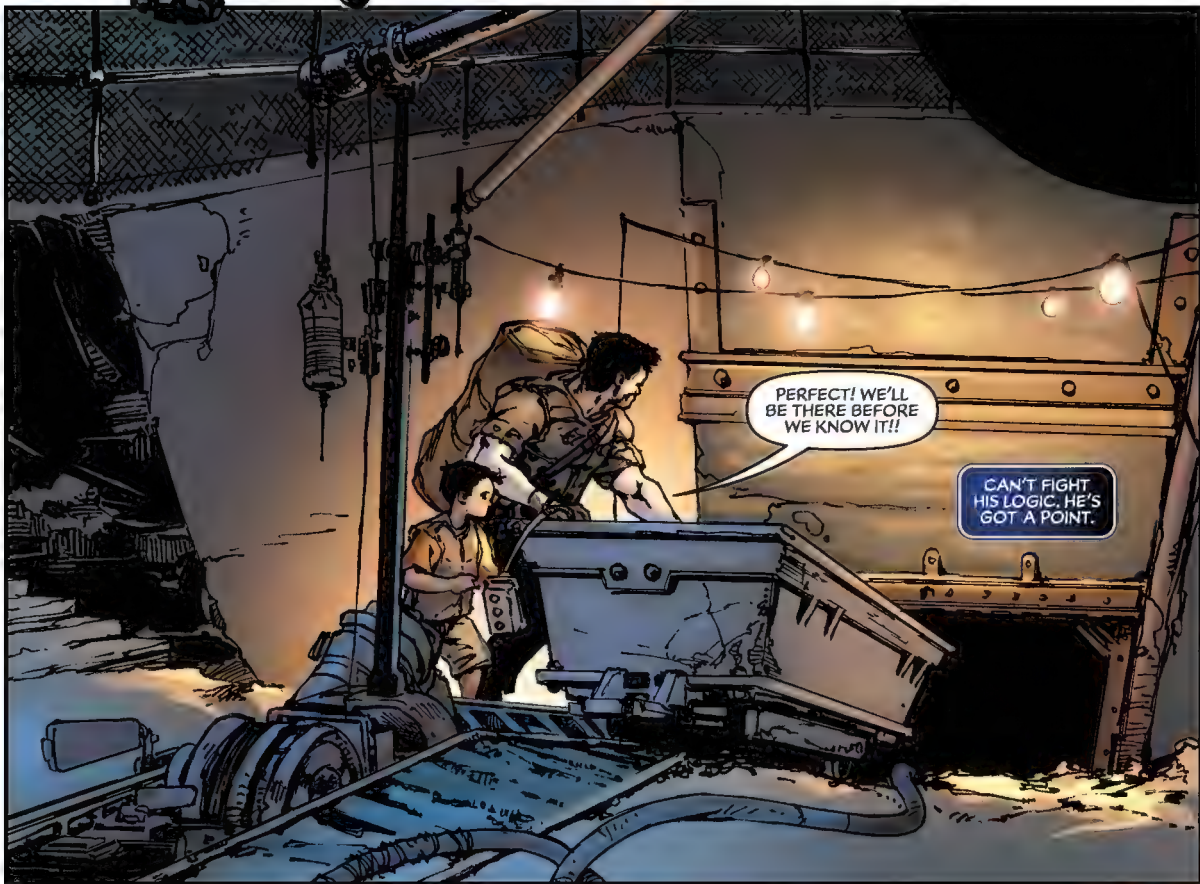
BUT IT WAS JUST
A DISTRACTION.

THEY... THEY'RE
TRYING TO CLAW
THEIR WAY THROUGH
THE REMAINS OF AN OLD
PATH SHUTTLE TUNNEL
THAT WOULD BRING
THEM... INTO NEW
JERSEY!

B-BUT,
DAD-- IF THEY
GET THROUGH?
EVEN ONE OF
THEM?

AND NOBODY
UP THERE KNOWS
ABOUT IT?

EVERYONE
COULD CHANGE.
EVEN... MOM.





DOESN'T...
DOESN'T SOUND
LIKE ANYTHING'S
HAPPENING
YET.

NOT YET.
NO.



LOOK, ALISON...
SEEING AS WE MIGHT
BE DEAD IN A MATTER
OF MINUTES--

--HOW WOULD
YOU FEEL IF WE
SPENT THAT TIME
TOGETHER?

YOU KNOW...
AS A MAN AND
WOMAN?



UM...



MMMNIEAH.

THAT'S GOING
TO HAVE TO BE
A "NO".

HEY, I
HAD TO TRY.
RIGHT?

NO HARM
IN THAT.





THE TUNNEL
ENDS TEN FEET
AHEAD OF US.

I'VE KILLED EVERY ONE
OF THEM BEHIND US.



WHICH MEANS NEWBURGH IS
SOMEWHERE JUST AHEAD.

C'MON.
IF I SAY
"RUN..."?

I RUN?



IN THE TUNNEL, I TOLD
HIM EVERYTHING.

HE DESERVED
TO KNOW THE
TRUTH.

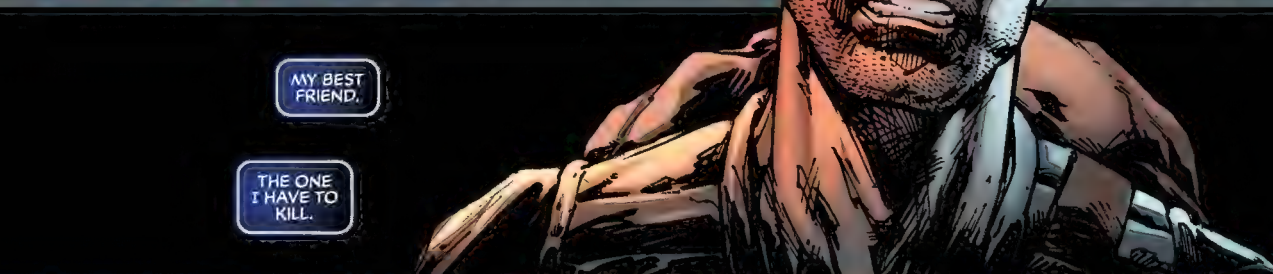


HOW THIS VIRUS CAME
FROM EUROPE... INSIDE
HIS UNCLE PETER.



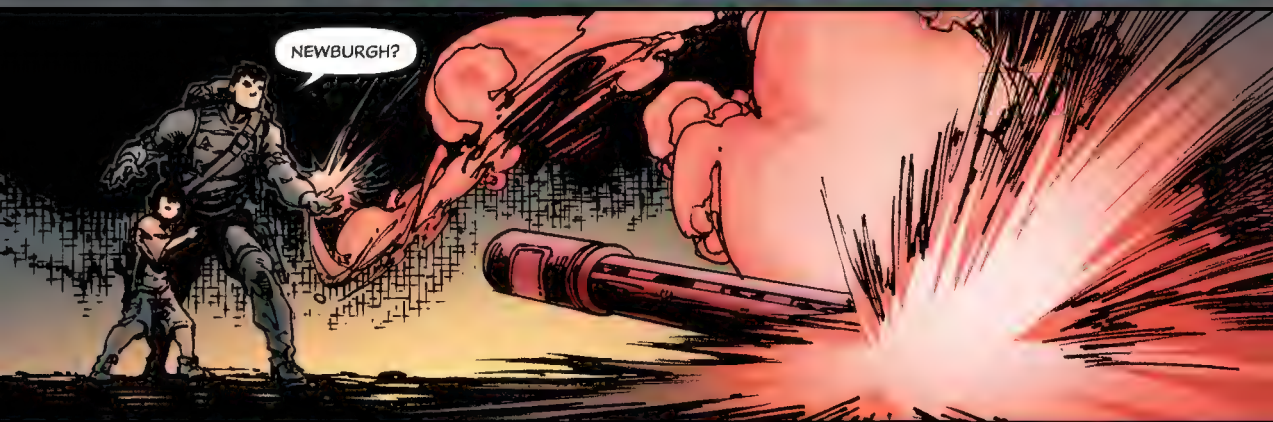
HOW DR.
NEWBURGH
WAS THE FIRST
GARGOYLE.

THE ONE I'M
TRACKING
NOW.



MY BEST
FRIEND.

THE ONE
I HAVE TO
KILL.



NEWBURGH?



SON
OF A—

HE'S A
LOT FURTHER
ALONG THAN
I THOUGHT.

I CAN SEE AN
ACTIVE PATH LINE
BEHIND HIM.

IF HE MAKES IT
THROUGH— AND THE
BUILDING COMES DOWN
LIKE I PLANNED...

FRSSSKT

...THEY'D BE SEARCHING
THROUGH THE RUBBLE
THE WHOLE TIME HE'D
BE INFECTING HALF THE
TRI-STATE AREA.

FROM THERE...
THERE WOULD BE NO
STOPPING THIS SCOURGE
FROM TAKING OVER THE
UNITED STATES BEFORE
ANYONE KNEW WHAT
WAS HAPPENING.

IT'S OVER,
PETE.

I'M SORRY.



UNCLE
PETER,
PLE--!

JON!



HE'S FASTER
THAN HE WAS
BEFORE!

B-BOOM

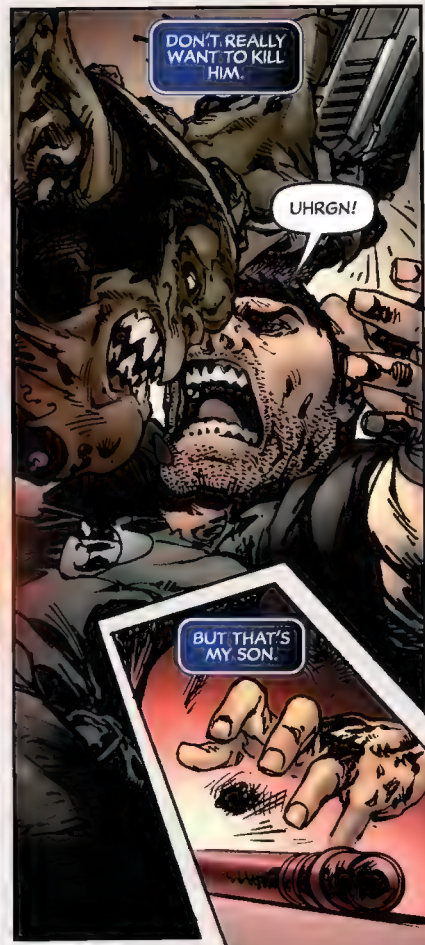
STUPID! I
SHOULD HAVE
SHOT HIM BEFORE
WE SAID A
WORD!



WAAACK

URHGN!

KNOWN THE
GUY FOR
YEARS.



DON'T REALLY
WANT TO KILL
HIM.

UHRGN!

BUT THAT'S
MY SON.



SKRRRR

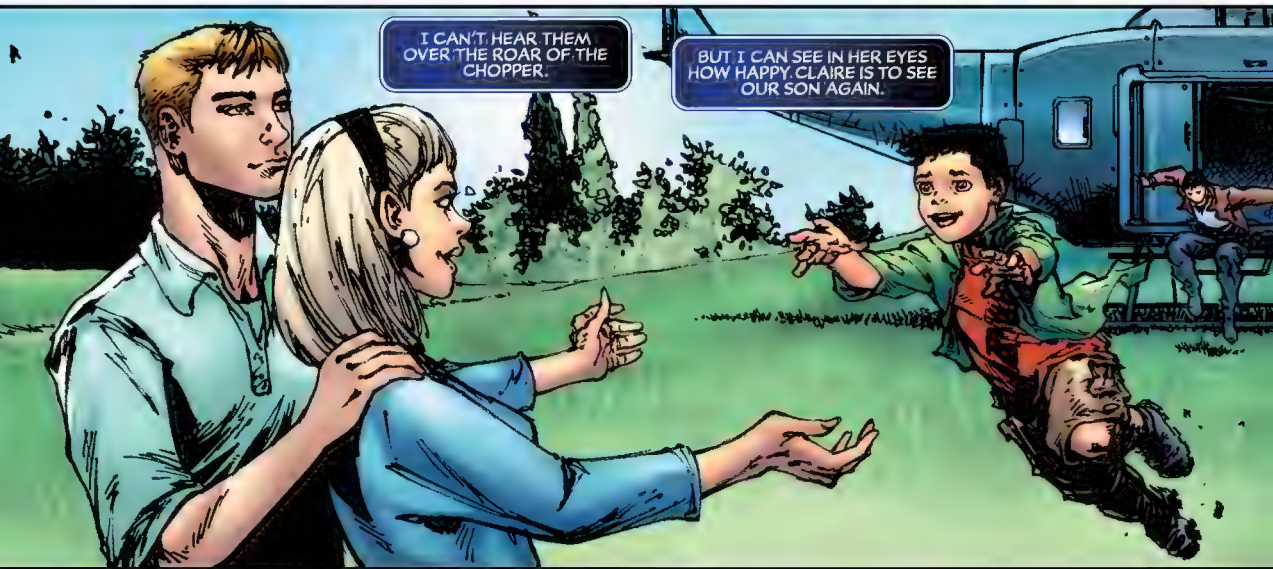
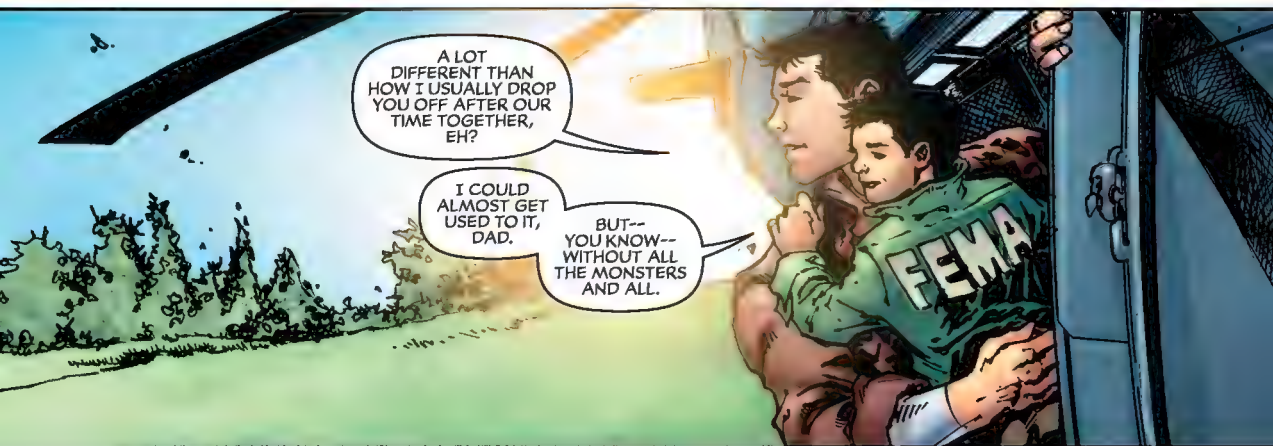
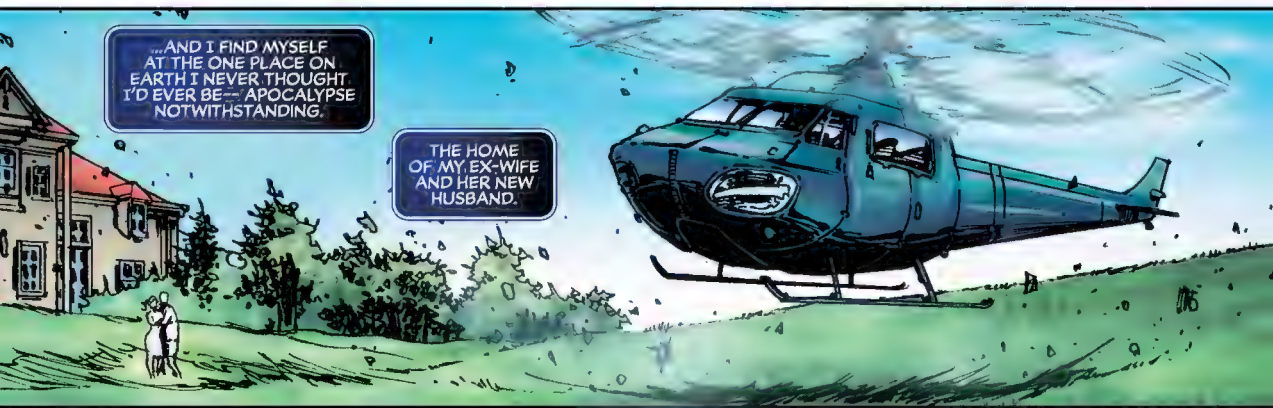
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM

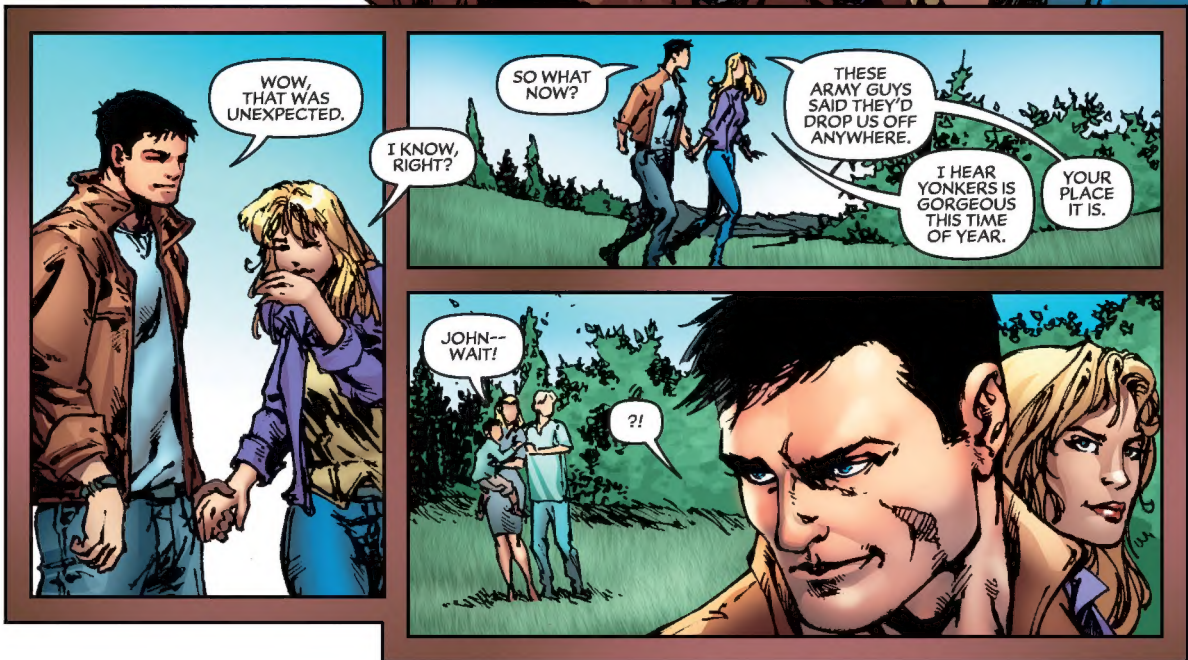
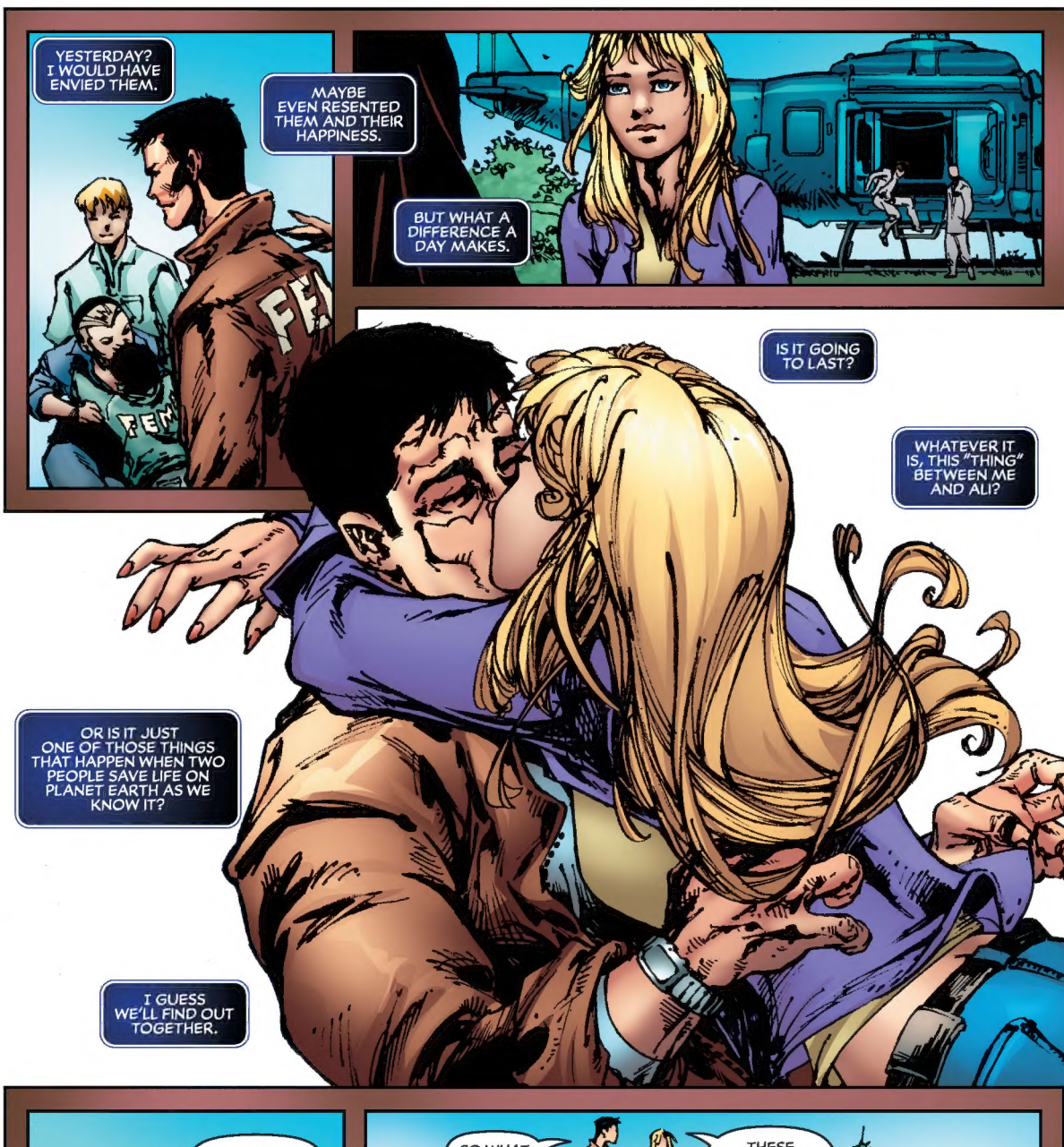
NO
CONTEST.

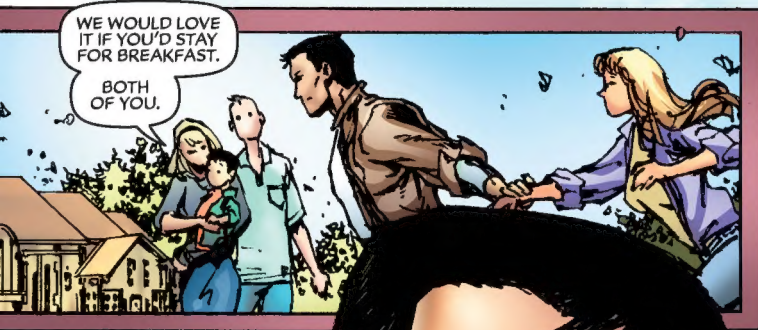












WE WOULD LOVE
IT IF YOU'D STAY
FOR BREAKFAST.

BOTH
OF YOU.

WHAT DO
YOU SAY, MISS
CULLEN?

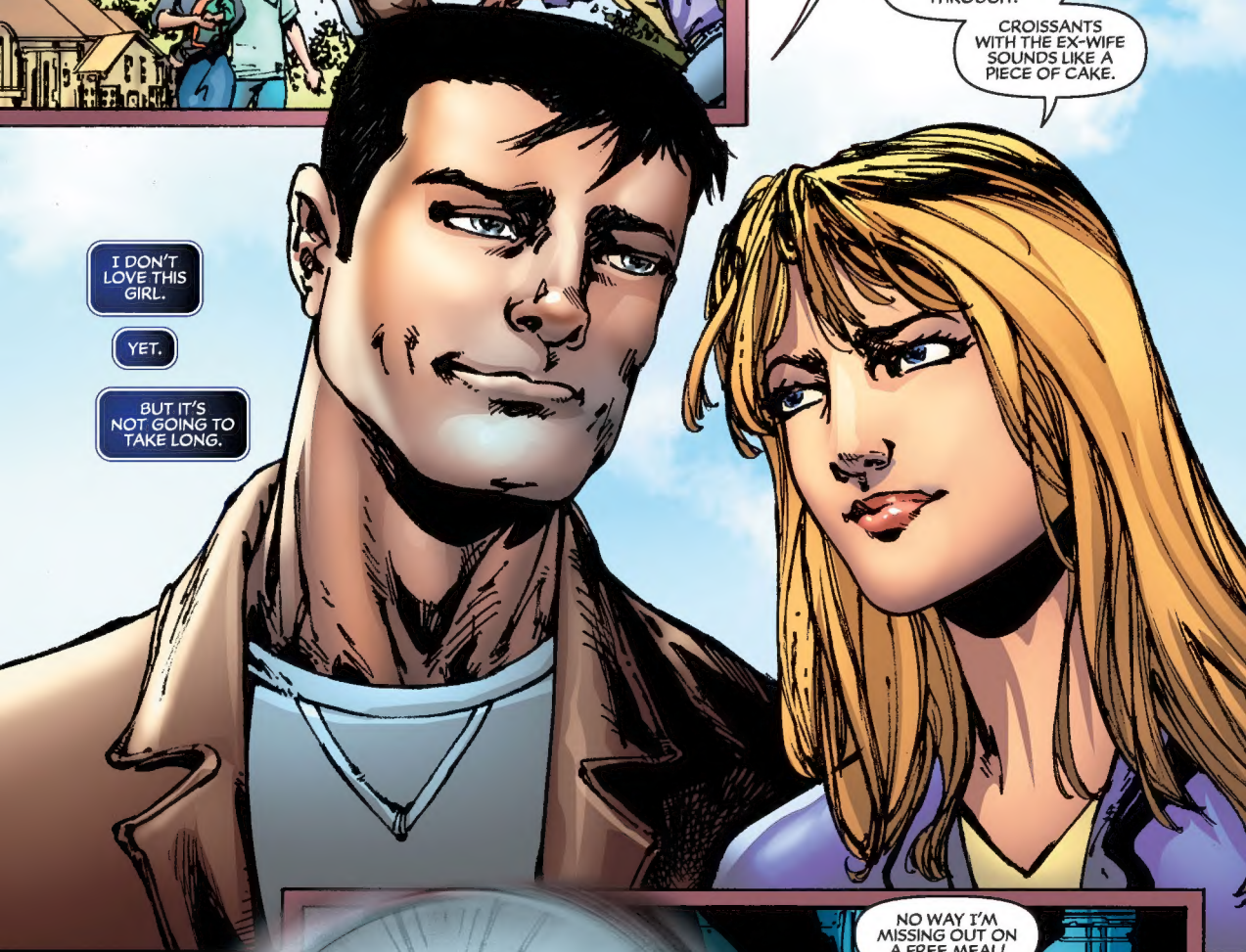
AFTER WHAT
WE'VE JUST BEEN
THROUGH?

CROISSANTS
WITH THE EX-WIFE
SOUNDS LIKE A
PIECE OF CAKE.

I DON'T
LOVE THIS
GIRL.

YET.

BUT IT'S
NOT GOING TO
TAKE LONG.



NO WAY I'M
MISSING OUT ON
A FREE MEAL!

AND ASTOR
MAKES
SIX.

A MOMENT
LATER THE MILITARY
COPTER TAKES
FLIGHT...

...AND JUST
LIKE THAT...

...THE WORLD GOES
BACK TO WHAT PASSES
FOR NORMAL.

I WANT
TO SAY,
"THE END."





AND I SHOULD.

BUT.



MAYBE I'M JUST BEING PARANOID.



MAYBE.



BUT I JUST CAN'T HELP WONDERING...

...WHAT IF WE MISSED SOMETHING?



?!



E-BAY, HERE I COME.



OUCH.
AH... IT'S JUST A SCRAPE.

NOT THE END OF THE WORLD.

THE END?



BATTLE 2010
B. Bly



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